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PARISIAN
YEAR

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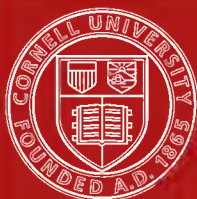
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BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THE WINE OF LIFE

THE DOOR OF DARKNESS

THIS DAY'S MADNESS

WIND ALONG THE WASTE

SHADOW-SHAPES

ALL AWRY

NIGHTS AND DAYS

MY PARISIAN YEAR



Maude Annesley

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MY PARISIAN YEAR

A WOMAN'S POINT OF VIEW

BY

MAUDE ANNESLEY

WITH TWENTY ILLUSTRATIONS

NEW YORK
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TO
MY FRIENDS IN PARIS
WHO HAVE UNCONSCIOUSLY AIDED ME IN THE
PLEASANT TASK OF WRITING THIS BOOK
I DEDICATE IT
WITH MUCH AFFECTION—AND SOME APOLOGIES

“If there’s a hole in a’ your coats,
I rede ye tent it;
A chiel’s amang ye takin’ notes,
And, faith, he’ll prent it.”

MAUDE ANNESLEY.

PARIS, 1912.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

“THERE are two kinds of critics, those who complain that roses have thorns, others who are grateful that thorns have roses.” I think the writer might have added a third—those who are thankful that roses have thorns! Thorns do add so much to the attraction of roses. I trust that the readers of these desultory jottings will realise this. The very imperfections of the Parisians tend to make the study of them the more interesting. The perfect is so dull.

These studies do not profess to be deep and serious criticisms; many clever books, which I do not aspire for a moment to emulate, have been written on the French nation. *My Parisian Year* claims to be nothing more than Paris seen through a woman's eyes—the point of view of a woman who has lived for some years in the city, and has known many interesting phases of its life. I make no pretensions beyond a good memory, a keen observation, and complete honesty. I have not striven after effect—what I think, I have

written. Many people may disagree with my opinions, no two persons think exactly alike on any subject in the world; no two persons can even give the same description of an incident that has taken place before their eyes. Robert Browning knew this when he wrote *The Ring and the Book*.

This must be my apology to those who differ from me. Some traits which I have praised as virtues another may look upon as faults; some which I have censured as faults another may laud as virtues. It would require great subtlety to speak of these characteristics without according them either praise or blame.

My critics may say that I am too enthusiastic on one side or the other—my justification, as far as blame is concerned, must be that thoughtful Frenchmen unite in impeaching the very same idiosyncrasies on which I myself pass censure.

If ten Englishmen were asked what they considered the chief fault in the French character, probably nine would say "insincerity." It will be noticed, very likely with disgust, that I have not deprecated this "vice." I think an insincere Anglo-Saxon is detestable, it is "out of drawing" in our countrymen. In a Frenchman it is "part of the make-up." As long as one does not want to become bosom-friends with them, insincerity, undoubtedly, makes the way smoother. Is it not more pleasant to have rose leaves strewn in your way,

even with an ulterior motive, than to have stones thrown at you for your soul's welfare? A Frenchman does not care a snap of the fingers about your soul's welfare, but he does care that you should think him a very charming person. And it must not be forgotten that, while he is throwing the rose leaves, he is quite sincere. "A Frenchman never loves or hates as much as he thinks he does." He does really mean what he says—for the moment. If he forgets five minutes afterwards, that does not make him any the less soothing.

When I was a child my governess was reading to me one day the parable of the man who had two sons, one of whom said, "I will not," and afterwards repented, and went. The other said, "I go," and went not. I horrified the poor woman by remarking thoughtfully, "I like the one best who said he'd go and didn't, he only forgot. The other was a nasty, bad-tempered thing!"

I feel sure that the former son must have had French blood in his veins!

There are many subjects I have not touched upon, such as politics and religion; not because they lack interest, or that they are not an integral part of Parisian life, but because they do not come within the scheme of a book of this class. They would be impossible to treat lightly. My aim has been to *see* something, and tell what I *saw*

in a plain way. If, amongst the little things which I have seen, there is one that can throw a scintilla of light on that complicated thing, the French character, I am content. If I can disabuse the English mind of one wrong prejudice, I am more than content.

Some one said once that a Frenchman was all head and heart, and no soul. I do not agree. His character is far too subtle an one to be dismissed in a phrase. He is made up of an enormous number of contending virtues and vices—kindness, hardness, simplicity, suspicion, infidelity, faithfulness, temper, sweetness, openness, secretiveness, chicanery, honesty, wit, and density. The difficulty for the less complicated Anglo-Saxon is to weigh these, one with the other, with no preconceived prejudices. And it is difficult. Apart from my criticisms on the French character—merited or not as they may be—I have related many amusing or pathetic incidents, most of which are from my own personal observations.

The streets of Paris are the most enthralling in the world for the observer, and I have striven to put before my readers little pen-sketches from my memory shelves—shelves stocked full of a kaleidoscopic collection of people and things, grave and gay, dull and amusing—from the city of my affection.

MAUDE ANNESLEY.

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MY PARISIAN YEAR



CHAPTER I

THE CHARM OF PARIS

TRYING to analyse one day the peculiar fascination that grips one the moment one drives out of the Gare du Nord, I realised that Paris appeals to three out of the five senses—sight, hearing, and smell.

There is nothing beautiful about the nearer surroundings of the Gare du Nord. The roads are wide certainly, but the shops are mean, and the houses dirty for the most part. But watch the people walking along the pavements, and sitting outside the cafés—they are so unconcerned, so neat, so full of *joie de vivre*! A bored face is seldom, if ever, seen in this city—temperamental, of course. Doubtless people have worries, just as they have in other countries, but they “face difficulties as they arise”; they “don’t make a sum of them, and say the total is intolerable.”

When a man has dropped a sou in an omnibus—one of the greatest tragedies that can happen to a Frenchman—his face expresses only a firm determination to find that sou ; he may get red and hot and dirty as he grovels on the floor, but he never sighs or swears.

Even the beggars seem to suppress with difficulty the naturally cheerful expression of their faces ; they look like supers in a play who have been trained to look miserable, and achieve it indifferently. There is one man here whom I can never pass without giving a few sous. He has no legs, and his progress along the paths is by means of a little wheeled platform and pads on his hands—but how cheerful he looks ! It does one good to meet his blue twinkling eyes, and see his merry smile as he thanks one.

The Parisian gaiety, it seems to me, is only partly temperamental, there must also be something in the air, because foreigners, who take up their abode there, nearly always lose their dreary look after a few weeks, and acquire a brisk one in its place.

Ah, if the doctors, instead of prescribing a rest-cure for chronic melancholy, would only send their patients to Paris, with strict orders to sit outside a café for some hours each day, and study the faces that go by in a never-ending stream ! There is nothing so contagious as cheerfulness.

And the sounds of Paris—the cracks of the

whips, which we English are so prone to misinterpret; the calls of the drivers to their horses; the cries of the street vendors; the laughing remarks thrown from one *cocher* to another; the clatter of the little saucers on the marble-topped tables of the cafés; the yell of the newspaper sellers (the paper's name usually, for some occult reason, combined with the wrong gender); and all the hundreds of *little* noises that cannot be distinguished, but form part of the great "Paris sound" that one knows and loves so well.

And, lastly, smell. I am sure that if I were blind and deaf, and were dumped down in Paris from a balloon, I should know at once where I was as I sniffed up that curious intangible scent that this city, and this alone, possesses. What is it? It is impossible to say. Algerian tobacco? Burning wood? A faint, faint suggestion of good cooking? The wood pavements? *Syrops*, absinthe, and wines that are consumed so much on the *terrasses*?

Perhaps a combination of all of these. But, anyway, there it is, elusive, fascinating, and impossible to analyse; and, more than sight or sound, it appeals to me when I return. My nose wrinkles up rapidly, I sigh, and say "Ah! PARIS," with that peculiar ecstasy that only Paris imbues one with, however much one may love other places in the world.

We do such idiotic things on returning to Paris. Has any one ever felt an overwhelming desire to kiss his hand to the Marble Arch? Yet I saw that done once to the Arc de l'Étoile!

And it is not only things that inspire one with affection, it is persons. The French are so confiding that the stiffest Briton must reciprocate.

An Englishwoman here on a visit the other day was quite worried about a woman who had manicured her nails, and who had confided her troubles to her fair client. It began like this: The woman, bending over my friend's hand, remarked, "Doubtless madame wonders why my eyes are so red? I am very worried, I have cried all night." And then proceeded to relate that her brother was very ill, and had been taken to the hospital. Presently her husband came in (he had been to the hospital to inquire), and the manicurist left off her work to hear all the particulars. My friend said to me, "I should have been quite annoyed in England if I had been left with one nail half-filed, but I found myself asking questions too, and really bothered when I heard that the invalid was worse."

There is a manicurist quite near where my friend was staying, but a few days after she took a tram journey and went down again to see the first one—why? Because she felt that she must know how the brother was progressing! She was genuinely upset when she heard that he was

dead. Now imagine all this happening in England ! Not an old customer, mind, but a complete stranger and a foreigner.

We may sneer as much as we like at the “ want of reserve,” we may quote all sorts of nasty things about hearts on sleeves, but the fact remains that we can no more keep up our reserve in Paris than we can lose it in England.

I think it was *Punch* that had a joke, the scene of which was in a barber’s shop :—

Barber (with scissors in hand, bending tenderly over customer)—

“ How do you like your hair cut, sir ? ”

Customer : “ In silence, please ! ”

I think that answer would have driven a Frenchman to suicide !

The Briton is so apt to think that “ Familiarity breeds contempt ”—it probably does in England, but in Paris one can chat with one’s inferiors about all sorts of extraneous subjects without their losing one iota of respect, and a respect that is far more noticeable here, with the address in the third person, than in England with its second person plural. Does it not sound much more respectful to say “ *Qu’est-ce que madame desire ?* ” than “ What do you want, mum ? ” In another chapter I shall deal further with this “ pallishness ” of one’s inferiors.

The fascination of Paris is, of course, much more

marked in the spring. Though every season has its own peculiar charm, I should always advise people, who wish to visit the city for the first time, to come in April or May. Then both the place and its inhabitants are robed in new clean dresses.

Is there anything more beautiful in their way than the Champs Elysées and the Avenue du Bois, with their bordering chestnut trees a mass of young green leaves and snowy blossoms? The pathways are crowded with promenaders. Hundreds of children with their nurses, *bourgeois* families, sight-seeing strangers, and members of the *haut monde* who have descended from their motors and carriages to take a little stroll in the sunshine.

You will see large groups of people, their chairs drawn round in a circle, all chattering at once, gay, gesticulating, staring at, and frankly discussing, the passers-by. The French are very gregarious, they come out *en famille* to take the air—father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, aunts and uncles, with children belonging to each—out they march, and sit in circles and talk, talk, talk, till one wonders how any question can be asked or answer heard. But how it all adds to the gaiety!

See the Bois on a fine day, with the family parties seated on the grass, their baskets and

parcels and string-bags of provisions for the al fresco meal, the children playing exciting games of ball or diablo—and not only the children. Foreigners are often astonished to see groups of “grown-ups” indulging in games of touch-wood or kiss-in-the-ring with no children with them as an excuse for gaiety.

The French is the most unself-conscious race in the world. Two people will meet in a frequented thoroughfare and embrace without the faintest idea that they are doing anything out of the ordinary. They will laugh and cry in public with no feeling of false shame—in short, they are completely natural. Sometimes, to a Britisher's taste, too natural; there are some things connected with children, he thinks, that might just as well be kept for the privacy of the bedroom—a nurse or mother will think nothing of nursing her baby, or making its toilet in public.

But oh, the joy of a fine day in spring! The whole world looks happy and contented. The lovers stroll along arm in arm, laughing and talking; he with a flower in his coat, she with a new dress, her hatless head shining in the sun, its neat rolls of hair brushed and burnished with the art that every little workwoman knows.

The children shout and play, the grown-ups laugh and play. Women with busy, important faces crowd round the shops with their newly-dressed

windows full of tempting spring novelties. The little tables outside the cafés are crowded. The flower-shops and stalls are marvels of brightness and perfume. The Madeleine market is a fairy glen of glory. The shop awnings have been newly washed and gleam white and red above the heads of the smiling, chattering throngs of *flâneurs*. The motors and carriages flash past full of daintily-clothed women and very smart men. Loafers sit on the free seats in the streets, and ecstatically smoke cigarettes, or lounge by the newspaper kiosks and grin at the pictures of the comic papers.

Paris seems to take spring to her arms like a long-expected and much-adored lover—spring is her personal property, come to her and her alone.

Only less beautiful than spring is autumn, which always brings to Paris some days or weeks of "St. Martin's Summer." About one out of six chestnut trees blooms again. It is no uncommon sight to see a tree covered with small, tender green leaves and the spiky white blossoms. There is one tree that is always the first to bloom again—it stands in the Place de l'Étoile to the left of the Avenue du Bois. I always watch that tree anxiously in the early autumn, and the first leaves and blossoms rejoice my heart.

Outside my window is a tree that came out

last year before any other in the Avenue. Oh, how distressed I felt when the late frosts came and the poor tender green was shrivelled and browned! Then came the long, hot summer, and my tree never looked the same as the others; it seemed to regret its haste, it bore no blossoms. In the autumn it was bare before the others, its weary leaves had fallen early. Then behold! one day, right at the very top, appeared one blossom and two leaves, small but perfect. It seemed to say, "Well, I will just show you that I *can* bear blossoms if I am only treated well!" Even the trees in Paris are kind.

In winter Paris always seems to me to be more expansive than other cities in the cold. She has more sun, more life.

It is cruel, I know, but last winter it did make me feel so pleased and delightfully selfish when I read that London had had seventeen days without one moment of sunshine! I stared at my carpet, where a long ray of sunshine was trying its weak best to fade the colours, and I *chuckled*! So horrid, but so human.

But analyse seasons and people as one may, the fact remains that Paris is *loved* as few cities are loved. People return over and over again, and laugh with joy when they see and hear and smell her. When they leave they sigh—it is like tearing oneself away from the arms of the Beloved.

CHAPTER II

LE PARISIEN

I HAVE no doubt whatever that the average *Parisien*, asked to divide the male inhabitants of the globe into three parts, would unconsciously paraphrase the Balliol undergraduate, and reply : “ There are Parisians ; there are the other Frenchmen—the rest are also God’s creatures.”

I believe that, in his heart, the born-and-bred Parisian regards himself as in a class apart—*hors concours* so to speak. Strictly analysed, it would be hard to say on what this conscious superiority is based, and I think that, to a great degree, it is innate and hereditary, a relic of the times when Paris was not only France, but the civilised centre of the world.

There is a good deal to be said for his point of view as far as other Frenchmen are concerned, for certainly the Parisian is a much more finished article than his brother of the provinces. One notices this superiority in all classes, but more particularly in the upper ten thousand.

Though the men of this upper class are very

content to *look* like Englishmen, though they copy our clothes, our walk, and our little peculiarities, though some of them go so far as to have their shirts washed in London, they would never really wish to *be* anything else but what they are, or to live in any other city but their own.

This upper class is divided very much as it is in England—Professional (which includes officers, *grands fonctionnaires*, political men, and so on), *rentiers*, who do no work, and aristocrats. But there is one great difference: those to whom I have referred as aristocrats belong to a class apart—the old Faubourg St. Germain. They “keep themselves to themselves,” and do not mix with *ces autres*. They live in a world of their own, ignore the Republic as much as possible, and keep up as well as they can the old pomp of other days. Nearly all these Faubourgeois are Royalists, and nearly all are religious.

I once heard a mischievous Englishman ask a Duchesse of the old school if she were going to a garden-party at the President’s palace; her head went up into the air, and she answered haughtily, “I am sending my concierge!”

They hold themselves aloof from politics, and they sneer at *fonctionnaires*. They appear to look round them with a pathetic wonder, and ask, “Où sont les neiges d’antan?” It always seems to me that they are *waiting*. They and their

ancestors have seen Republics come and go. Will it last for ever? they seem to ask. Forty years! It is a long, long time. If France ever does have a Monarchy again how they will blossom out, these old aristocrats, and how happy they will be!

Many of them are officers, notwithstanding the disadvantages they labour under, being viewed as they are with suspicion because of their birth and their faith. They are patriots at heart, these stiff aristocrats, and even the Republic cannot kill their love for *La France*, or make them forget the profession of their forefathers.

Naturally they all have to do their military service, conscription makes no distinction between classes, but their service is not a very happy one, poor things, and they have to put up with a good deal of petty spite.

The Anglo-Saxon in Paris must constantly be puzzled by the word "sportsman." Amongst us a sportsman is a man who *does* something in the way of sport; here it includes the *looker-on*. Any man who goes to see a cricket-match, who goes racing, who watches the polo, is a "sportsman." Incidentally, many more things are designated as sport here than in England. All field games are sport, as well as hunting, shooting, fishing, etc.

A small instance of how "smart" it is to use



THE "SPORTSMAN" AMUSES HIMSELF.

a word connected with sport: there is a small shop in Paris which sells cravats, collars, etc.; over the shop is blazoned "Le Steeple." For some time I imagined that this had some connection with a church opposite, till it dawned on me that it referred to *Steeple-Chase*!

Apropos, there are many shops here with English names, one of the best known being a tailor's, which rejoices in the appellation of "High Life." Naturally, this is called "Ig Lif" by Frenchmen, and, when first I heard this, I fancied the person was referring to the only garments of our first parents, and was much relieved when I realised my mistake.

A few years ago it became the fashion amongst the "smart" young "sportsmen" to use a few words of English when speaking amongst themselves. I remember how amused I was one day at the races to hear one address another, accompanied by a slap on the back, with, "'Allo, ole boy, 'ow are you?"

They talk about "riding-breeches," which is certainly shorter than "pantalons pour monter à cheval."

I deal in another chapter with racing, and the curious English used in connection with this sport.

Club-life, as it is known in England, is practically non-existent. Apart from three or four clubs of the highest class, social, sporting, and artistic,

election to which is very difficult, they are carried on almost exclusively for purposes of gambling. The clubs have no political significance, and membership of them—always with the exception of those few mentioned above—carries with it no social distinction.

Of the gambling clubs I prefer to say nothing ; they exist for every class, from the highest to the lowest, and they do an enormous amount of harm. Though occasionally one is raided owing to some scandal, the rest flourish. In these clubs there is no rule, as in England, limiting the games played to whist, bridge, and so on, and forbidding such games of chance as baccarat, *chemin de fer*, and roulette.

It will thus be gathered that the club in Paris is not to the Parisian, as it is to so many Englishmen, a second home ; and, if he wishes to make a rendezvous with a friend, it is usually arranged at his favourite café.

Quite one of the features of the recent development of the Parisian is the gradually increasing love of outdoor sports. Some years ago schoolmasters were utterly oblivious of the benefit to youth of this form of exercise ; now at many of the best colleges the boys play football and tennis, etc., and the result is visible in the young man, who takes a keen interest in golf, football, polo, tennis, and so on. It is no unusual sight nowadays to

see a Parisian wending his way to the environs of Paris with his racket or golf sticks in his hand. And, though the excitement over sports has not yet reached the proportions that it has in England, nearly every Sunday in winter there is a football match, and when France beats any Anglo-Saxon team there is an enormous amount of interest shown. And this is no rare event now; France is beginning to hold her own in all forms of sport. Even boxing, hitherto regarded by Britishers as their own exclusive right, claims many victors in France—the excitement when the young Carpentier knocked out Sullivan (the English middle-weight champion) in two rounds was tremendous.

Fencing, of course, enters largely into the Parisian's life, but then fencing has always had its chief exponents in France.

While speaking of sport I must mention that shooting is not at all the same thing in France as it is in England. Except for the President, and by one or two very large landowners, game is not preserved to any great extent, and the "house-party" is almost unknown. Men go from Paris for a week-end's shooting, and the "get-up" of some would amuse an Englishman greatly—a tweed costume, putties or leggings, and a Tyrolese felt hat with a little feather in it!

Of course, the Frenchman has always been a good horseman, and he still rides as well as ever

he did. In the season you see the Parisians riding in the Bois in the mornings in their hundreds—it is quite the correct thing to do.

In the afternoons and evenings the *mondain* is to be seen at every kind of function: teas, receptions, picture shows, first nights—he goes everywhere, dressed very correctly. He bows low before ladies, kisses their hand, and pays delightful compliments. Apropos—I rather like this French custom of kissing hands; I know some Englishmen laugh at it, and call it “rot,” but it is certainly graceful when prettily done. An English friend, the other day, who was staying in Paris objected to the habit at first, then he astonished me one day by adopting it himself—he did not do it quite as to the manner born, but, after one or two lessons, it was surprising how it became second nature. It certainly added charm to his already good looks—alas, he has gone back to England, and, I fear, will have forgotten his lessons!

Of course, in Paris women are much more *necessary* to men than in Anglo-Saxon countries. The Parisian's idea of a party is not a gathering where he meets men only. He likes his women-kind about him—in a word, he cannot get on without female society.

There is one great difference between the Englishman and the Frenchman that I feel I

must touch upon. It is quite *comme il faut* for a Parisian to have a mistress. He does not keep her secluded, he is not ashamed of her, she is an acknowledged fact. I do not attempt to point a moral—this is not a treatise on the *morale* of the Parisian. I am striving to make this book only a light, discursive description of “things seen”—I merely note that a Parisian’s mistress is a part of his life, and her existence is not considered a secret, any more than the word *maîtresse* is considered an improper one.

I was at the races one day with a French lady, and I pointed out to her a woman who was passing. “Oh look,” I said, “what an awfully pretty woman.” She turned to me smiling: “Yes, isn’t she?” she answered brightly; “she’s my brother Pierre’s mistress.” Can you imagine what, under the same circumstances, the answer would have been in England?—a hushed, shocked whisper—“Oh, don’t look at her, my dear. It’s awful, but they say that poor Peter is entangled with her. Of course I don’t *know*, but I fear it is true. It’s really disgraceful,” etc. etc.

It is because of this “terrible” openness about his *affaires de cœur* that the Parisian has got his name of fearful wickedness. The feminine traits interest a Parisian enormously. In no country in the world is woman so noticed, and the reason for this is, to my mind, very clear. An Anglo-

Saxon looks at a woman's face only, and if, at the first glance, she presents no overwhelming charm, he does not look again. A Parisian has a peculiar faculty—he sees the *one* good point. If a woman has beautiful hair he sees it, and casts a glance of admiration at it—her plain face is unimportant. A good figure, a graceful walk, pretty feet, it does not matter what it is, if a woman has any one feature out of the ordinary it will attract the Parisian's eagle eye, and receive its quota of admiration.

In no other country are plain women so successful, for usually the *Parisienne* is not pretty. You may go to a theatre night after night and not see one beautiful face amongst the respectable audience. But she undoubtedly has charm, and this the men are quick to discover.

To the woman alone in the streets this is naturally a nuisance. Of course Paris is not the only city where the *suiveur* abounds, but he has a way with him here which is somewhat embarrassing.

An amusing thing happened to a girl of my acquaintance. She was shopping at the Printemps, and when she came out a well-dressed man circled round admiringly. As she hailed a cab he came up and lifted his hat and asked, "May I be permitted to follow madame?" My friend is Irish, and she explains that the demon of mischief suddenly seized her! "Yes," she answered,

“but at a distance.” She made her cabman take a long round, she drove half over Paris. Finally she alighted at her own door in the Avenue du Bois, and the faithful *suiveur* drove up as she paid her cabman. As she entered the *portecochère* she turned to the beaming man and said quietly, “You must go up by the servants’ staircase, my husband is very jealous.” After telling him the floor he vanished up the *escalier de service*. When she entered her flat she said to a maid, “There’s a man coming up to the back door, give him some bread !” I leave the subsequent tableau to the imagination of the reader. Personally I have always felt very sorry for that man—after all he did ask permission, and the Parisian is not always so considerate !

The Parisian makes mistakes very often, but I fancy that, on the whole, he realises his mistake quicker than the men of other nations.

I constantly hear complaints from Englishwomen that “people stare so !” They do. Both men and women stare, but I think that they do not mean it rudely. They take an interest in a person, or in what that person is wearing, and they show their interest frankly. They will not turn away their eyes when their absorption is noticed, but continue staring. I imagine that the French child is not taught in his youth that “it is rude to stare,” hence this complete ignorance of the rule when he

arrives at years of discretion. When I first came to Paris and found an eye (especially a female eye) fixed upon me—in an omnibus for instance—I would ask my companion anxiously whether I had a smut on my face, or a hole in my veil, but now I am quite used to this unwavering gaze, and it does not worry me any more than would the unblinking stare of a baby.

Another complaint of the average foreigner, who does not happen to have Latin blood, is the insincerity of the Parisian. Of course, he is insincere—but who wants sincerity in a casual acquaintance! Surely it is more pleasant to be told that you never looked more charming, that your hat is the very chicest thing possible, and so on, than to be greeted with an indifferent handshake and a remark about the weather? What does it matter that he has forgotten you an hour after? He has made you feel “purry-purry” at the time, and has given you the added confidence and the brightness of outlook that only the consciousness of a becoming hat can give to a woman. I persist in saying that it is nicer to be noticed than to be ignored.

I once grumbled to a Frenchman about the insincere compliments I received. He opened his eyes in astonishment and gasped out—“*Insincere?* How could they be insincere?” After that added flattery of course argument was impossible.

One must remember that it is only of late years that the *finesse* of flattery has died in England—alas! it died with the cravat. Did not even Dr. Johnson—who was never considered the ideal beau—turn a neat compliment when he wrote to Mrs. Montagu when she was ill—

“To have you detained among us by sickness is to enjoy your presence at too dear a rate. I suffer myself to be flattered with hope that only half the intelligence is true, and that you are now as well as to be able to leave us, and so kind as not to be willing”?

Dear, dear! If a Frenchman wrote that nowadays to an Englishwoman, how she would sneer at his “insincerity.”

Pray do not imagine that I am vaunting the charms of a Parisian as opposed to those of my own countrymen—I am not. I only protest that a few compliments make the way smoother for every woman.

The Frenchman knows far too much about a woman to be fascinating to me personally. It is so soothing to believe that one is a mystery, and one can never believe that in Paris! The Parisian has brought his understanding of woman to such a point that it is uncanny. Nothing one says deceives him; he knows exactly what one is feeling, what one is thinking, what one will say or do under different circumstances. That is why the

sentimental “misunderstood” love-story is impossible in France. The book where Jack and Jill meet and love in the first chapter, do not realise that they are loved for twenty-four chapters, have an extraordinary and accidental enlightening in chapter twenty-six, and fall into each other’s arms in chapter twenty-seven—this kind of book of anæmic sentiment, which trickles lightly over unawakened emotions, would make a Frenchman give a puzzled smile, for does he not know at once when he begins to interest a woman? Of course he does, and he knows every stage of the game. A Frenchwoman presumably loves this; she who understands the mystery of the toilet better than women of all other nations does not care for, or desire, the mystery of the soul.

CHAPTER III

LE PARISIEN (*continued*)

THE Parisian of the *haut monde* is, of course, only a small part of the male population, though, from one point of view, the most interesting.

After him, descending the scale of classes, we arrive at the *petit bourgeois*. He is a small *rentier*, a partner in some little firm, a clerk, and so on. Then we get the shopkeeper, then the shop employé, and the workman. Family life is the chief characteristic in all these grades. A Frenchman is the most loving father and son in the world; it is a trait greatly to be admired.

The Parisian is not a snob—not even the smart young man of the upper ten. No Frenchman would ever think of being ashamed of his relations, the tie of blood is very strong. It is no unusual sight to see a very well-dressed man at a restaurant with his old peasant mother who has come up to visit him from the country. You see filial devotion beaming from his eyes, and the white cap of her province makes no difference to him—she is his

mother. It is very touching and very beautiful, to my mind.

Monsieur also goes out on Sundays with his wife and children, and his adoration of his progeny is quite startling. It is the extraordinary closeness of the family life that makes hospitality an unknown word amongst the middle-classes in France. The Anglo-Saxon love of "friends dropping in to take pot-luck" does not exist in Paris. The privacy of the home (an English word, by the way, that is now used) must not be desecrated by chance visitors. Also, no one is ever asked to stay, unless it may be *père* or *mère* from the country. As Mr. Charles Dawbarn so aptly remarks in his clever book, "France is the country of no spare bedrooms."

If a Parisian wishes to invite a business friend to dinner, he asks him to a restaurant. I say business friend, because I am sorry to say that the average Parisian is very mean, and he would rarely spend the few francs necessary without the hope of a *quid pro quo*.

This meanness is innate in the French character; it is astounding to what depths monsieur and madame will descend to save a few sous. They call it economy, and it is undoubtedly this "economy" that has made France the rich country she is. It is rare to find a *père de famille* who has not his few thousands of francs invested in *rentes*.

And not only the father of the family—every one. One's servants have their *dot* put by ; the employé in a shop—every single worker saves his few sous a day or week and adds them to the ever-increasing hoard. On the day when the subscription to a new loan takes place, you will see a vast crowd waiting with its money outside the doors of the banks, and the published announcement afterwards always shows that the amount has been subscribed very many times over !

Practically the only thing on which the Parisian is extravagant is his holiday. In August he and his family always leave Paris for the sea or country, though occasionally it is for a destination but a few miles out of Paris. This is characteristic—how many Londoners would take their holiday in a hired villa at—Wimbledon, for instance ? In this month one constantly sees a notice glued to the closed shutters of a shop, “ Shut till such and such a date owing to absence in the country.”

The Parisian is very clever, he realises that “ all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy,” and that his change will invigorate him and make him a better worker for the rest of the year.

I read a letter in some English paper once advocating the business man taking his holiday alone, relieved from family cares. How a Parisian would scoff at this ! Family cares—why, they are the breath of his nostrils. I verily believe that, if a

Frenchman were separated from his children, he would pine away. They are always with him, morning, noon, and (often) night. The question as to whether this is good for the children I will deal with in another chapter, but, that it tends to the happiness of the parents, no one can doubt who has seen mother, father, and children playing together in the Bois on Sundays, or at the seaside on their holidays.

As to whether "Monsieur Dupont" is a good business man entirely depends on the point of view. He gets up very early, and arrives at his office long before an Englishman would. It is no uncommon thing for any one, wishing to do business with a French firm, to receive an appointment for eight o'clock in the morning, or even earlier.

The Parisian is a wonderful book-keeper, and his office is the neatest thing imaginable. But he spends so much time in placing his papers in *chemises* (a paper cover, which no French office could exist without), that it leaves him very little time or inclination for any initiative, or even to consult them after they are once *classés*. He is usually quite content with his business as it is, and any enlargement would be only a bother. This is a very curious trait, taking into account his love of money; it probably arises from extreme caution—the Frenchman is the most cautious man on earth. He argues thus: "I am

doing very well as I am, I have saved the *dots* of Jeanne and Louise, we live quite comfortably, and I have saved enough for my old age—if I did so and so it might be a failure, then I should lose money.”

As for the wisdom of doing anything for nothing in the hopes of future returns—a Parisian scoffs at the idea. The Anglo-Saxon methods of business stagger him, to his mind they spell ruin, and he never can quite understand why disaster does not follow in their train.

Another unbusiness-like quality—the Parisian is proverbially unpunctual, time is nothing to him, though he is so fond of quoting, “Time ees monny.” Many Anglo-Saxons are irritated by this; they wait patiently for a man who has arranged to visit them on business at eleven—he turns up perhaps at four !

The relations between employer and employé are much more personal in Paris than elsewhere. In England, if an employé wants a rise in salary he will ask for it frankly, giving no reasons beyond his long service. In Paris an employé will come to his chief, ask for a rise, and proceed to explain why he needs it—food is now so dear, his wife has just been ill, he has another baby, and so on. He says that he cannot *live* on what he gets, and, if he can convince the employer that this is so, he gets his rise. “The living wage” is an acknowledged right in Paris. These personal details are

not exclusively between employer and employed. Every man who goes to an office on business sits down for a chat, and all sorts of matters are discussed. It takes a long while for an Anglo-Saxon to get used to this "eccentricity" as he calls it; he considers that it is most annoying to have his work interrupted by chatterers.

Another reason that prevents a Frenchman from being what we are accustomed to call a good business-man is his mistrust of his employés. In every single business an enormous amount of time is wasted in controlling and recontrolling every sou taken and every article sold. The waiters at cafés and the better restaurants are the only instances where the customer pays the server direct. In the small restaurants you pay *Madame la caissière* yourself, and she enters the amount in one of the numerous books with which she is surrounded. At all the big shops you have to take up your position in a queue, and wait patiently till your turn comes to pay at the *caisse*. If the cashier is adding up one of his complicated and lengthy columns you must not disturb him—for he has to get that column balanced before he starts another! and pray do not be in a hurry, because if he is a sou out he will have to make the addition all over again. It is trying to the patience of any one who is used to the business-like quickness of London shops,

but the Parisian is used to it, and he belongs to the most patient race in the world.

Every Parisian mistrusts his neighbour, every one thinks he will be "done" by some one else. Given this trait, it is remarkable that great swindlers can thrive in Paris, yet they do. Last year a man started a bank with a great flourish of trumpets. He sent out artfully-worded circulars saying that he had discovered a method by which he could invest money, and pay one per cent. *per day*—this man's well-appointed offices were overwhelmed with the money that came pouring in! When the police arrived—after he had fled—they found that he had received over one million of francs, and by every post for days afterwards came more money. This arises from greediness. Any wild-cat scheme fascinates a Parisian, the more fantastic it is the more will he rush to be in it. In what other country could a Madame Humbert have flourished?

Yes, a Parisian will trust a financier if he be daring enough, but he will never trust the employé he pays to serve him.

The great fancy shops are certainly managed very well, barring the irritating method of paying, and goods are delivered most promptly. The same cannot be said of the largest provision stores perhaps in the world. Here your goods are not delivered even the next day unless you order

before noon, and sometimes not then. Yet this shop has the most immense number of delivery carts. It has always been a mystery to me. I presume the method of controlling is so complicated that it requires two full days.

Most workmen in Paris are bad. Work is shoddily done, and few months pass before it all has to be done over again. Your shelves are made of unseasoned wood, which, after a few days' warmth, wave up and down like switchbacks. Your electric light fittings are fastened to the walls with flimsy nails, which come out with a shower of plaster. Your bath geyser never by any chance works well, and if you telephone frantically for the workman, you are told by the firm who has placed your geyser that the plumber will come as "soon as possible"—this usually means several days. Your sun-blinds come unhooked in a breeze. Your door-plates and curtain-poles come unfastened. In fact, good workmanship is rare.

The workman himself is a good-natured, sober man, devoted to his family, but his employer thinks nothing of breaking his promise. My advice to any foreigner who is setting up an establishment in Paris is to reckon on getting into a flat about one month later than anticipated—like this many bitter groanings will be saved. It is *impossible* to trust the word of your carpenter,

plumber, landlord, or any other of the many on whom you are dependent in that soul-racking operation of instalment in a new abode.

Speaking of landlords reminds me that he is a type of Parisian that I cannot here ignore. Let a foreigner realise at once that the law gives *every* right to the landlord. The tenant has no rights. It is advisable to show your lease before signing to a competent lawyer, as the owner of your house will do everything he can to cheat you. In my own case in one instance I noticed that *one* servant's room was inserted in the lease (servants' rooms are never in the flat in Paris, but on the sixth floor). I had seen the *two* rooms, so remarked on the lapse. He smilingly informed me that I was quite mistaken, the late tenant had hired the second room! I refused to sign the lease—result: I got my two rooms! He had hoped to let the room out of which he had cheated me to another person. A great many landlords allow no children and no animals in their houses. A foreigner who has not noticed the clause about dogs often has a very unhappy time. Another nice little habit of some landlords is to take up the stair-carpet with the excuse of the annual cleaning, and leave you carpetless for three months. No protest avails—there is nothing in the lease about it. Every single Parisian unites in abusing the landlord—he is anathema.

A few words about the Parisian's sense of humour. As we know it he has none. The man in the street is gay, childlike in his amusements, spontaneous, and delightfully happy, he will laugh over the very blatant and often indecent jokes in the so-called comic papers, laugh heartily. But to the dry humour of a witty phrase he is cold, he simply does not see it. Jokes must be hammered into him, and he laughs at things in which we can see no humour whatever. Some are cruel. Any deformity will make him die with laughter—always, be it understood, in a comic paper, he is kind enough to cripples when he meets them. A number of a paper that had an enormous success some years ago, and which is still being sold on the boulevards, consisted entirely of disgusting, and often horribly indecent, pictures and text about doctors and diseases. A very fat old woman being sounded by a leering doctor was found excruciatingly funny. A doctor pouring medicine down the throat of the wrong person made the reader hold his sides with joy. There were others that are unmentionable, and all of them in some form or another pointed the finger of derision at suffering. Coarse caricatures are always in request, and no one is sacred. The President, well-known politicians, actors, actresses, and, in fact, any one who is sufficiently famous is liable to see himself in a paper on the kiosks

in the most embarrassing caricatures, the favourites always being those more or less unclothed.

There are very, very few Parisians who understand the form of joke which is apparently serious. They take everything *au pied de la lettre*. I was driving in a cab once to a shop in the Avenue de l'Opéra, when my *cocher* stopped and said he could not go any farther. I stood up, and saw in front of me the whole street up, with a huge hole about sixty feet deep. They were just then building one of the underground railways. As I prepared to descend I said quietly, "What's the matter? An earthquake?" He answered gravely, "Oh no, Madame, we've had no earthquake in Paris. It's only the railway works!"

It is certainly rather trying when you've made a small joke to be always taken literally. If you see a man furiously angry and trying to fight another, and you remark to your companion "he seems a little upset," some one is sure to turn round and explain to you that he is not a "little upset" but very angry indeed!

Bernard Shaw could never be a success in Paris, he is too subtle. If you translate a really funny thing to a Parisian it is always a dead failure. Jokes must be pointed, and they must, above everything, mean what they say. Yet the Parisian *has* a sense of humour of his own, though, as far as I can see, it is usually roused to its height

by the type of joke which pokes fun at other people, and there he is sharp enough to appreciate it. The *revues* in the music halls, which I shall refer to later, depend on this class of joke. Nothing escapes the authors, every little happening in politics or finance is seized hold of, and they are very up-to-date; that is why no foreigner who does not live in Paris ought ever to see a *revue*, he cannot understand it.

CHAPTER IV

LA PARISIENNE

THE militant suffragette could never flourish in Paris because *feminism* is an accepted doctrine there. Women have a place in the scheme of things which, possibly, they have not in any other country. It is not so much that a woman *does* things, as that she is at the back of everything that is done. She does not vote—though doubtless that will come in time without any agitation—and she is not permitted a seat amongst the “Immortals,” even Madame Curie was defeated when some of the members of the Academy wished to elect her. However, France has gone farther than England, and, amongst many other privileges, women are now amongst the barristers, and, I am told, are excellent.

But it is difficult to explain in words the extraordinary influence of woman behind the scenes. In everything except votes and membership of the Institute she has equal rights with man, and in the home her rights are paramount.

The Parisienne is an excellent mother and a wonderful housekeeper. Her energy and vivacity are remarkable, and she makes a very good wife. As we count it she is not intellectual, she rarely or never reads—in the majority of Paris homes one never sees a book. The French are not readers. As far as I can make out, writers support each other by buying each other's books (like the inhabitants of certain islands by taking in each other's washing !). The only people I have ever known to discuss literature are the ones who make it. The only homes I know with bookshelves are those of *littérateurs*. Newspapers are read by the dozen, but every observant foreigner must have noticed the absence of books amongst travellers in trains, for instance. Whereas nearly every Anglo-Saxon will be reading a book, the French will be talking, staring out of the window, or reading some newspaper bought at a station *en route*. I travel a good deal, but only once have I seen a French person with a volume, except once or twice a priest with his book of devotions.

How Madame passes her day is a mystery to any one who cannot imagine getting through the long hours without literature. Though I am bound to mention that the *conférences* (of which there are always an enormous number) are well attended by women—it is a way to get knowledge without bother—the Parisienne has not enough application

for the effort of reading. She likes to know things, but she likes the method to be easy.

In all classes a lot of time is occupied with the children, if there are any. Madame may have thoroughly capable nurses, but this does not prevent her spending long hours fussing over the welfare of the little ones. I will treat more particularly of this in my chapter on children, but no description or explanation of *la Parisienne* would be complete without referring to her devotion as a mother. The nursery, as it is known in England, does not exist, and the children are present at every meal, and whenever there are visitors. I must acknowledge that Madame's mother-instincts run to spoiling; it is rare to find the Parisian child well-behaved, and then, nearly always, it is because the nurse or governess is English.

It is becoming the fashion amongst the better classes to employ an Englishwoman in the nursery, and I feel sure that it will have a salutary influence.

Except amongst the very wealthy Madame devotes a considerable time to housekeeping. When one or two servants are kept she will inspect the goods bought by the cook, examining the meat, the fowl, and the vegetables with carefully prodding fingers. Then she will often help to cook some special *plat*. In fact, where there is a *bonne à tout*

faire, the mistress occasionally undertakes the gastronomical part of the ménage entirely.

But, naturally, this all applies only to the *petite bourgeoise*, the others spend their time differently.

In the *haut monde* many hours are devoted to personal adornment—the manicuring of the nails, massage of the face, and so on. It is not by a happy chance that the Parisienne is the best-dressed woman in the world—an enormous amount of time and thought is given to the subject. Madame does not dash off to her dressmaker or *modiste* with the idea that she “wants a dress or a hat”—not at all. She will occupy days in reading all the fashion-papers, and perhaps discussing with her maid or a friend the rival attractions of various illustrations. She will then go to the house she patronises with the intention of spending several hours there, and, if necessary, several more hours the next day. To watch a Parisienne choosing a gown is an education. The stuffs and trimmings are draped over stands in different lights, then *mannequins* walk up and down slowly, sit down, stand up, lean this way and that. The head of the house will bend tenderly over Madame, explaining the beauty of the models. Perhaps Madame does not like a flounce or a collar—it is altered on the spot, and another tacked on for the effect to be judged. So it goes on, till Madame, somewhat exhausted, descends in the lift to her waiting



"LE FIV' O'CLOCK" AT BAGATELLE.

carriage, and is whirled away to her “fiv’ o’clock,” to refresh herself with tea and gossip.

Thus passes a great part of the day for the *mondaine*, but it is difficult to realise how her humble sister occupies the time. She, also, in her small way, exercises her mind over dress; she wanders through the big shops for hours, buying nothing, but noticing everything. Or she will go where the fashionable congregate, and take stock of ideas. Then her fertile brain and clever fingers produce a “creation,” sometimes wonderfully successful.

Men take a huge interest in the clothes of their womenkind, and it is surprising how much they know. Often have I seen a man in a shop advising and suggesting, and nearly all the remarks were to the point. Once, when I was at my *modiste’s*, a Frenchman was there with his wife, and one hat she tried on he said was very becoming, but—and he turned to the server—“*Mademoiselle*, I think it would suit Madame better if you put in a *barrette* this side.” Imagine an Anglo-Saxon knowing what a *barrette* is!

Of course a very large preponderance of Parisian women work. Whereas in England marriage is considered by the vast majority as an end of the time of toil, in Paris it is by no means so.

A girl marries a man who is employed as a clerk, for instance—she will continue her occupation as

cashier in a restaurant, or server in a shop. Monsieur works all day, and Madame also, and they meet at night, sometimes for lunch as well. It is this double employment which makes the Parisian home so prosperous. Money is saved and put by every month. The children which may come are thought of long before there is any certainty of their arrival. Even the very humblest families give their daughters *dots*. Where their children are concerned French parents are very unselfish, denying themselves many of the luxuries of life so that their progeny may be certain of having a good start. It must not be forgotten that a *dot* is essential, for the prudent Parisian rarely thinks of marrying a dowerless girl. Marriages are arranged by the parents, seldom by the interested parties themselves. Naturally there are some exceptions, even a thoroughly practical Parisian has sometimes been known to fall desperately in love !

It is really astonishing how well these *mariages de convenance* turn out. The Frenchwoman is eminently domestic, and the idea of a home seems to make up for the lack of romance.

Amongst the upper classes it is not an unknown thing for Madame to have *un ami*, and, as for Monsieur, he very frequently has his *chère amie*. This is not considered scandalous in Paris, and I am bound to mention it—to ignore it would be to

ignore actuality. The fact of having a lover does not make the Parisienne neglect her home or children or husband, and Monsieur's *petite affaire de cœur* does not make his treatment of his wife any less charming. Sometimes the whole world knows of these "friends," and the virtuous Anglo-Saxon shrivels up with horror when they are casually mentioned. Apropos of this common acceptance of the state of things, I must tell here a story that set *tout Paris* chattering last year. The Comte and Comtesse X were excellent friends, well-known Society leaders, and very delightful people. The Comtesse's "friend" was a man of their set, *très smart, bien distingué*. One day Madame was very sad, and her husband noticed it—she and her "friend" had quarrelled. The next day the X's were at the horse show. As they sat in their places, laughing and chattering with their friends, something happened which had the effect of a bomb thrown in their midst—Monsieur A, Madame's friend, walked slowly by chattering with a notorious *demi-mondaine*. There was concerned and embarrassed silence, then the Comte rose, walked up to Monsieur A and boxed his ears—for had he not insulted his wife! The resulting duel created an enormous amount of interest.

After this can it be said that the Parisian has a sense of humour?

Every Parisienne is a coquette—rich or poor,

pretty or plain, young or old—they all, from their earliest youth, strive to please the male. *The consciousness of sex* is never absent. The type which is so common in England of the “sporting” girl, full of life and high-spirits, hard, indifferent to men, the type which is referred to as “a good fellow,” is utterly unknown in Paris. First and foremost a woman thinks of sex, and she dresses for the confounding of the male. Mr. Charles Dawbarn in *France and the French* has treated this subject very fully in his clever and interesting chapter on “Comparative Moralities,” and, as I am not attempting to write a serious treatise on social problems, I shall not deal profoundly with this subject. But with one opinion of Mr. Dawbarn’s I disagree—I consider that Frenchwomen *are* flirts. The Parisienne bridles and preens herself before the male, inviting the compliments which never fail to come. I have seen fat elderly women brighten up and be coquettish when they are addressed by a man. The dull, careworn, hard-worked waitress seems to gain new life when a customer of the opposite sex addresses some remark to her not apropos of his food.

That flirting, as a rule, goes no farther than flirting, I admit. It remains at the happy stage of compliments and *persiflage*, unless it is a case of really desperate love—then your Parisienne does not look before she leaps. The point of view

that it is virtuous to "take all and give nothing" is unknown in Paris; it seems peculiar to the mind of a certain type of Anglo-Saxon. The "how-dare-you" attitude is inconceivable for our Paris woman. She is not ignorant, and she knows that men are not made of milk and water. She has never been ignorant, even in her *jeune-fille* days. She knew all that was to be known—how could she remain without knowledge when at the home table she heard every subject discussed with complete openness? The tragedies of ignorance (sometimes mistakenly called "innocence" by the wooden-witted) one hears of in England are impossible in France.

The method of bringing up the *jeune fille* arises from the parents' knowledge that sex is paramount. The girl has no worldly knowledge sufficient to counteract the desires of the flesh—therefore she must be watched. The Anglo-Saxon sneers at the fact that a girl is not allowed to take tea with a friend without an escorting elder; he says, "*Our* girls go about alone and are all right!" Quite so—our girls do, and can. But there is one small difference these sneerers fail to remember: Latin blood runs in the veins of these *jeunes filles*, and in the veins of Frenchmen in the streets!

Though, amongst the upper classes, the girl is not being brought up in these days in quite the secluded fashion that was habitual a decade or so

ago, she is still guarded carefully whenever men are likely to be about, and it is wise. The French know themselves—they trust no important letter unregistered to the tender mercies of their Postal System, they trust no promise unless it is written on stamped paper, and they do not trust their daughters until they have learnt worldly wisdom.

That there are gossippers in England, especially in the provinces, we all know ; but nowhere has the art reached the perfection that it has in Paris. I think the Parisienne spends half her days at least in discussing the affairs of others. She takes a consuming interest in her friends and neighbours, and will go to untold trouble to find out something she wants to know. This is confined to no class. From the concierge's lodge to the fashionable salon of the *grande dame* other people are the great topic of conversation. In Anglo-Saxon gatherings one can hear every subject discussed : books, golf, shooting, racing, some crime or accident that is filling the columns of the papers, and so on, with only here and there perhaps a spicy piece of scandal. In Paris you may pass from group to group and hear nothing but personalities, health, and dress. This refers, of course, to the ordinary fashionable or semi-fashionable circles ; in the literary and artistic salons there are other interests.

I was regaled one day at a house where I was calling by a long, unsavoury story about Monsieur X

and his wife's maid. I did not know Monsieur X, and the subject did not interest me, but five women and two men were discussing the subject with enthralled faces, Monsieur X, I found out, being known to only two of those present.

When a marriage is on the tapis there is huge interest shown amongst the friends and acquaintances of the parties in the amount of the *dot*, and the guesses and surmises last as an ever-green subject until the real sum is known.

For all her charm and extraordinary attraction, Madame *la Parisienne* interests herself in very little things, yet this race has produced many brilliant women, and will go on producing them. One wonders whether the George Sands of France ever got their maids to find out from Madame B's maid how much was spent per day on house-keeping in the B household, and whether the man who came every day was really Madame B's cousin !

These few and desultory notes of my personal observings of the Parisienne would not be complete without some mention of a Parisian institution—the mother-in-law. This lady, the subject in England of cheap music-hall and comic-paper jokes, is a much respected and loved friend of the family, a friend who very, very often joins the young ménage. Either Monsieur or Madame's mother frequently comes to share the new domain

when they set up housekeeping, and I must say that rarely have I heard of any disagreement. As I have said before, the love of parents is innate in the French character, and it is as well that it should be, as the parents sacrifice a great deal for their children. Anyway "belle-mère" is loved and petted, and the evening of her days is a happy one. She may be more tactful than in England, she may not interfere so much, that is probable, but the fact remains that the joke about the mother-in-law would fall very flat in France.

The chief virtue, in my opinion, of both French men and women is their intense kindness of heart when any one is in trouble. It is beyond praise. When I was in great anxiety of mind once the kindness I received from all classes was most touching. The woman I used to buy my flowers from in the street called many times, and told me she had offered up candles to her saint with a prayer for my dear one's recovery. A friend who lost her husband was visited by a cabman he had once helped, who brought a poor bunch of flowers in his memory. How pathetic, how admirable is this sympathy !

Showing the view the Parisian takes of women it may be of interest to my readers to recount a competition the paper *Excelsior* had a year or so ago.

“What are the most important virtues of women?” A list of sixty was given. The competitor was invited to choose them in their order of importance according to his or her personal opinion.

I append the result! The numbers are the amount of votes polled for each. I have given the French words as they appeared in the paper, and have added my own translation. I may say *en passant* that it is not easy to give the exact nuance in English of many of these qualities, as some of my readers, who know both tongues, will appreciate. It must not be forgotten that these virtues are applicable to women only.

FRENCH.	ENGLISH.	No. OF VOTES.	FRENCH.	ENGLISH.	No. OF VOTES.
<i>Bonté</i> . . .	Kindness . . .	76,696	<i>Simplicité</i> . .	Unaffected- ness . . .	13,281
<i>Ordre</i> . . .	Tidiness . . .	73,724	<i>Abnégation</i> . .	Abnegation . .	13,112
<i>Dévouement</i> . .	Devotion . . .	71,344	<i>Volonté</i> . . .	Determina- tion . . .	12,019
<i>Economie</i> . . .	Thrift . . .	64,941	<i>Discretion</i> . .	Discretion . .	11,716
<i>Douceur</i> . . .	Gentleness . .	50,022	<i>Esprit</i> . . .	Wit . . .	11,463
<i>Intelligence</i> . .	Intelligence . .	40,170	<i>Bienfaisance</i> . .	Beneficence . .	11,334
<i>Amabilité</i> . . .	Amiability . .	38,958	<i>Prévoyance</i> . .	Forethought . .	11,040
<i>Fidélité</i> . . .	Fidelity . . .	36,214	<i>Loyauté</i> . . .	Loyalty . . .	10,698
<i>Patience</i> . . .	Patience . . .	35,460	<i>Jugement</i> . . .	Judgment . . .	9,115
<i>Modestie</i> . . .	Modesty . . .	30,551	<i>Elégance</i> . . .	Elegance . . .	8,854
<i>Honnêteté</i> . . .	Virtue . . .	27,455	<i>Indulgence</i> . .	Leniency . . .	8,547
<i>Sagesse</i> . . .	Prudence . . .	26,826	<i>Sincérité</i> . . .	Sincerity . . .	8,168
<i>Courage</i> . . .	Courage . . .	23,876	<i>Générosité</i> . .	Generosity . .	7,935
<i>Goût</i> . . .	Taste . . .	23,218	<i>Vaillance</i> . . .	Fortitude . . .	7,446
<i>Délicatesse</i> . .	Refinement . .	19,845	<i>Sensibilité</i> . .	Tenderhearted- ness . . .	7,259
<i>Gaieté</i> . . .	Cheerfulness . .	19,472	<i>Finesse</i> . . .	Tact . . .	5,874
<i>Grâce</i> . . .	Graciousness . .	18,126	<i>Droiture</i> . . .	Uprightness . .	5,812
<i>Activité</i> . . .	Activity . . .	17,924	<i>Résignation</i> . .	Resignation . .	4,918
<i>Dignité</i> . . .	Self-respect . .	16,530			
<i>Energie</i> . . .	Energy . . .	16,130			
<i>Franchise</i> . . .	Frankness . . .	15,073			

FRENCH.	ENGLISH.	NO. OF VOTES.	FRENCH.	ENGLISH	NO. OF VOTES.
<i>Confiance</i> . .	Trust . . .	4,778	<i>Complaisance</i>	Complacency	2,288
<i>Raison</i> . .	Good sense .	4,124	<i>Fierté</i> . . .	Dignity . .	2,253
<i>Exactitude</i> .	Punctuality .	3,898	<i>Désintéresse-</i>		
<i>Persévérance</i> .	Perseverance	3,822	<i>ment</i> . .	Self-efface-	
<i>Bienveillance</i>	Friendliness .	3,768		ment . .	2,110
<i>Prudence</i> . .	Caution . .	3,722	<i>Docilité</i> . .	Docility . .	1,853
<i>Clairvoyance</i> .	Perspicacity .	3,678	<i>Originalité</i> .	Originality .	1,306
<i>Fermeté</i> . .	Firmness . .	3,209	<i>Pondération</i> .	Mental bal-	
<i>Décision</i> . .	Decision . .	2,576		ance . .	1,205
<i>Réflexion</i> . .	Thoughtful-		<i>Modération</i> .	Moderation .	946
	ness . .	2,465	<i>Netteté</i> . .	Cleanliness .	698
<i>Reconnais-</i>			<i>Humilité</i> . .	Humility . .	493
<i>sance</i> . .	Gratitude . .	2,356	<i>Application</i> .	Thoroughness	436

To any one who has not studied the French character this list will be found exceedingly enlightening. It will be seen what an enormous number of persons entered for the competition, therefore the order in which these qualities come must, presumably, be taken as the order of *importance*. It will also be seen that, as a rule, those that have polled low down on the list are the virtues that are most uncommon in the French-woman.

Take the first ten (the competitor who had these in their exact order won the prize)—all Frenchwomen are kind, tidy, devoted, thrifty, gentle, intelligent, amiable, and modest; and a very, very large majority are faithful and patient.

In contrast to these it will be noticed that sincerity is thirty-third on the list, kindness receiving over ninety times the number of votes. Moral: It is better to be kind than sincere!

Tact, to the Anglo-Saxon mind so important, polls but 5874 votes. Thoroughness, or application (the *nuance* is difficult), comes last on the list, alas ! Perseverance comes forty-third. Firmness and decision are next to each other very low down. Gratitude is lower still.

One thing amuses me—wit has but twenty-sixth place. I presume that the eleven thousand votes came from women competitors—men do not require wit in the opposite sex. *Sois belle, sois bonne, et tais-toi !*

Then beneficence, twenty-seventh place, and generosity thirty-fourth. “Oh yes, certainly be generous and charitable,” sigh Monsieur and Madame, “but be those other things first !” Charity begins at home !

Why leniency is so neglected I cannot imagine—every Frenchman requires his wife to be lenient, and she usually is.

Sagesse takes eleventh place, it ought to have been higher up, for the Frenchwoman is always *careful*. It requires a thorough intimacy with the language to appreciate the *nuance* of this word and the way it is frequently used.

Loyalty in twenty-ninth place puzzles me. Why so low down ? Madame impresses me as very loyal, using the word in the large sense. The readers who may have smiled at my gibes at the French economy will acknowledge that I am

justified by the fourth place it takes on the list. Also the fifty-sixth place given to mental balance must convince the Frenchman out of his own mouth that this is not a necessary quality in his opinion.

It will be seen that self-effacement comes last but seven. Humility last but one. No Frenchman wishes either in his wife. Madame is consulted by Monsieur in everything. She is not, and he does not wish her to be, a cypher. He is a "pal" of his wife's, more so than in any other country. *À bas désintéressement !*

How amusing and interesting it would be if a similar competition were held in other countries. I should much like to see the result in England or America. What would the first ten be? Probably something like this—

Sincerity
Cleanliness
Devotion
Fidelity
Tact
Refinement
Generosity
Thoroughness
Intelligence
Fortitude

Why does not some enterprising paper take this suggestion? I am sure the competition would be very popular.



IS THE BIRTH-RATE REALLY FALLING ?

CHAPTER V

CHILDREN

I ONCE remarked to a Frenchwoman, "What wonderful parents the French are!" She shrugged her shoulders and answered, "Too wonderful, *ma chère*! We spoil children. They rule us with a rod of iron."

I fear she was right. There is a happy medium between relegating children entirely to the nursery and having no nursery at all.

As I have said elsewhere, the English governess or nurse is becoming an institution in Paris, and in time they may alter a little the more objectionable traits of the *enfant gâté*. In one family I know an Irish lady has had charge of the children for six years, and, though the boys are now big and go to school, she is still in the house. The boys are delightful people; they eat in a refined way, have nice manners, and their naughtinesses are but the ordinary high spirits of boyhood.

In other cases I know, where the children have English nurses, the improvement in their behaviour, since the advent of these, is astonishing.

A few years ago it was only in the families of the *haut monde* that our countrywomen were found, but now it is becoming quite an ordinary thing to see English nurses in their neat costumes walking with children. If they are permitted by the fond mother to have full control over the children, it is well, but this is not always so. I happen to have met a girl who came over from England to take a place as governess in Paris. She was a lady, and had been used to children. I think she had four situations in a month, then she gave up in despair, and returned to her own country. I must own that she was not lucky, as there do exist a few mothers who are trying to be sensible. Her experience was instructive. All the families she entered were respectable, middle-class ones, and the parents apparently ordinary sane people—but where children are concerned our ideas and those of the French clash hopelessly.

In her first place this lady had a boy of seven to take charge of. He slept in her room. During the first night she was there the mother came into the room five times to see that the ewe lamb was safe. Once the poor governess was startled from her sleep by the lady covering over her mouth with the bedclothes. She told me she wakened in terror, thinking she was going to be murdered ! But no—Madame explained that she was breathing rather heavily, she thought she must have a cold,

therefore she must try and breathe under the clothes, or the boy might be infected!!

The morning toilet operations took one hour and a half. The child did not have a bath except twice a week at night. The morning arrangements consisted of these: First, he was dressed, then his hands and face were washed. Then a basin was prepared containing water (the temperature of which was taken) and a powder prescribed by the doctor. Then the boy sat in the mixture for four minutes, his clothes having to be carefully tucked up and down, and held out of the way. After that he was re-dressed. For two mornings his wretched governess had to undress and re-dress him completely, because the mother found that one flannel had been put under instead of over another flannel. He wore five different warm undergarments, including a baby's binder and a belt! This child was not delicate—the servants told the Englishwoman that the only ailment he had ever had was measles.

He had to be taken every day—if mamma, after investigation, found the weather suitable—to a certain spot in a certain public garden. The first day the governess found that Madame was following her to see that all was well; on three of the other days Madame appeared in the gardens to assure herself that her darling had not been taken elsewhere. The boy was abominably naughty

and disobedient, and when he roared his mother would come to the room and promise him sweets if he would be good. She told the girl in his presence that neither she nor his father could do anything with him, and he looked triumphant. Amongst our proverbs there is one that the average French parent has never heard—"Little pitchers have long ears!"

In another of this girl's situations the mother followed her in her walk to see that her instructions had been carried out.

Is it surprising, under the circumstances, that children are naughty? The parents chide any one who tries to correct their faults, and discuss before them what is to be done when they are disobedient. They will order them to do something, and, when they refuse, the mother will coax, storm, bribe, and finally give in with a gesture of despair. I have seen this over and over again.

The children rarely have a room for their own use, and they have lunch *and late dinner* with their parents, going to bed far later than is good for them.

The Parisian child is by nature amiable, bright, good-natured, passionate, and very intelligent. If it is brought up wisely there is no more charming child in the world. It is not the children's fault if they are naughty.

"Little beasts!" I heard an Englishwoman

remark after leaving a house where the two children had upset the whole room full of guests. It would have been more apposite if she had said " Foolish parents."

No one can quarrel with the mothers and fathers for their adoration of their children, they are the fondest and most unselfish parents of any nation, but they *will* not see that spoiling is bad for their progeny. To banish the children entirely to the nursery and hardly see them at all is not right, but the wise rule of the " children's hour " is an excellent one. Late dinner is not a meal suitable for babes, it is bad for their minds and for their digestions. To continually hear every subject discussed makes them unchildish and priggish.

There is no doubt that this unwise arrangement arises a good deal from the " flat " habit. There are no houses in Paris except the hotels of the rich, and in a flat, I own, it is difficult sometimes to have a nursery. But this is not the only reason. I have known many families in flats in England where the children seemed well-behaved enough.

It is a curious fact that, notwithstanding their spoilt childhood, children grow up loving and honouring their father and mother. A grown man will obey his mother when he would not have thought of doing so as a boy. A young man or woman cannot marry without their parents' consent, and they seldom take any step in life without

family consultation. The tie is a very, very strong one.

In nearly every class in England, except the really poor, the children have a nurse. Mary-Ann may be but fifteen, and possess a permanently smutty face, but, such as she is, she is there to take care of, and go out with, the children. In Paris there are countless well-to-do people who do not employ a nurse. Madame dresses and undresses the children, feeds them, takes them out, and plays with them. They are always with her. Monsieur returns from his employment in the evening tired and cross, to be greeted by screaming or laughing children—and he likes it. I cannot imagine a French father saying irritably, “Oh—the children! Why aren’t they in bed?”

Not at all. “Monsieur Dupont’s” chief joy in life is a Sunday or holiday, when he can go out for the day *en famille*, very often pushing the go-cart himself, or carrying one of the smallest children. The families are not large in Paris—witness the periodical agitation about the falling birth-rate. (The last Census shows a preponderance of about thirty-five thousand deaths over births.) There are comparatively few cases of more than two children, and one seems to be the favourite number. That this is owing to the flat difficulty there can be little doubt, as in the country families are much larger. It is all very



THE MANIFESTATION OF THE "NUMEROUS-FAMILY" LEAGUE.

well to write "increase and multiply" treatises, but when *appartement* houses are the rule what is to be done? A great many landlords will not take large families.

This has led to screamingly funny incidents lately. There has been a Society of Large Families formed, and a certain Monsieur Cochon (under the circumstances a suggestive name!) has taken the hardships of the prolific parent under his wing. The whole of Paris shrieked with laughter when one wretched family of ten was turned out by a long-suffering landlord, and went in procession—furniture and all—to try and find a lodgement. In vain; eight children was too much for any self-respecting house.

So Monsieur Cochon hit on the happy idea of building sheds in the Tuileries Gardens! Many willing hands helped, but the amused police soon came, pulled down the partly erected dwellings, and told the crowd to move on. A procession with a banner (there is a banner for everything in Paris!) formed, and Monsieur Cochon plumped the family and furniture down in the Préfecture de Police buildings! Surely no family has ever created such embarrassment before. A large-hearted and, possibly large-familied, landlord has been found, and the family is at rest. But there are others, and our friend Monsieur Cochon is untiring.

The children of the poor seem to me much better behaved than those of the better classes. Probably the mothers have no time to "make idiots of themselves" over them! All the public gardens swarm with children, amusing themselves with mud pies, games, and "make-beliefs" in an ordinary sane way.

In the Buttes Chaumont the children of the respectable poor (there are *no* ragged, starving children in Paris) play, while mother and grandmother sit on a seat, and do needlework, and gossip. In the Luxembourg Gardens there are probably more little ones than anywhere else; there the classes are mixed. Also in the Tuileries. In the Parc Monceau the better classes predominate; also in the Bois (except on Sundays and fête days), especially in the Pré Catalan Gardens.

It is a wonderful sight on a fine day to see the Avenue du Bois swarming with *nous nous* with their long flowing ribbon-caps, *bonnes*, and countless small people playing and laughing.

I must explain here that the *nou nou* is the wet-nurse, who is *de rigueur* in the upper classes; they wear wide ribbons tied round their caps, which flow down their backs to the hem of their dresses.

Not so many years ago it was customary to send babies out to nurse, very often to the country, where they remained for a considerable time. But this has gone out of fashion, except for working

women, who cannot help themselves. Seeing how the Frenchwomen adore their children it is difficult to realise how they ever parted with them.

When Master Jacques or Jean has to go to school there is much commotion in the family. Madame is heartbroken. And, be it remembered, it is not a boarding-school ! Oh dear, no. Public schools, as known in England and America, are absolutely non-existent. French boys very rarely leave their family. But there is such fear that the life of the *lycée* will spoil the mother's darling. There are several famous *lycées* in Paris, and the education is splendid. The French, undoubtedly, have the gift of imparting knowledge, and they are gradually acquiring the capacity of teaching manliness as well. Sports and gymnastics are becoming more and more common in the big schools, and the result is already noticeable.

Another English fashion that is creeping in is the much more suitable way we dress our children. One still sees many quite big boys wearing socks, and the expanse of bare leg is not pretty, but there are numbers of parents who realise that stockings, though less economical, are more manly. Babies and tiny children used to be dressed in a ridiculous way, but now silks and satins, flowers and feathers, are being left more and more to the lower classes, and it is considered very *chic* for the children of the rich to wear cotton frocks and sun-

bonnets. An illustration of this came to my notice a short time ago. A maid of mine, a widow, has a girl of seven who lives with her grandparents in the country. A friend of my maid's, last New Year's Day, gave her a summer bonnet for the child, and she showed it to me, with disgust on her face. It was of white straw, trimmed elaborately with white satin ribbon, forget-me-nots, and a white feather. "What *can* I do with it, Madame?" she asked distressedly. "I would not offend Marthe for anything, and it must have cost a lot."

To find out what she would answer I asked why she did not like it. "Madame knows!" she said indignantly. "I like my little girl to be dressed like a lady, even though she isn't one."

"Like a lady," to her, who has lived with *mondaines*, means in cotton in summer, and in serge in the winter. For "best" she sent her a dainty white pongee silk and lace slip, made out of a petticoat of mine.

It is certainly a comfort to see the poor mites no longer unable to play for fear of soiling their grand garments; and the perfectly hideous plaids, which were the rage a few years ago, are dying out rapidly. But this simplicity has not yet reached the girls of twelve to fifteen, who are ridiculously overdressed in absurd imitations of the latest fashions. At the races one now sees

child *mannequins* (poor things) strutting about, clothed in the dressmakers' latest modes of the moment.

The rosy, healthy complexions of our children are rarely seen in Paris—how can one expect it when the poor mites do not go to bed till nine or ten o'clock? And, moreover, they are allowed, except by the few sensible mothers, to eat everything they fancy.

One constantly sees children at dinner in the small restaurants. So many families “live out,” as I will explain in my “Servant” chapter, and what is a mother to do if she has no servant? She prefers to save the money a nurse would cost, and add it to the *dot* of the child when it grows up. Whether every one would not be happier and healthier if the baby had a nurse when she was young, and a few hundred francs less when she married, has not seemed to strike any one.

Anyway, as I was saying, there the poor, tired, cross children sit. In every small *prix fixé* restaurant you will see on the card “Couvert d'enfant” so much. This consists of soup, bread, and sometimes vegetable. But this does not prevent the fond mother stuffing her infant with tit-bits off her own plate.

I was once eating a hasty dinner in a station restaurant seated at the same table as a boy of about eight, and his father and mother. Papa,

looking at the menu, was about to order *langouste* for himself and wife, when mamma leant forward and whispered: "Cheri, don't have *langouste*. Last time Georges had it he was ill for days."

"Oh," said the father, "I'll order something else for him."

The lady shrugged her ample shoulders, and remarked that that was no use, as Georges would insist on having it, and would scream. "We've no time for a dispute," she ended.

So, because Georges would scream, the parents went without their *langouste* !

I cannot help thinking that the overwhelming amount of nervous diseases in the grown-ups is to be accounted for, to a great extent, by the way the children are reared. Self-control not being taught to the young, how can one expect men and women to possess it? From their earliest years they are used to seeing their parents' want of mental balance, and are used to having their faults discussed before them, and to hearing it bemoaned that "no one can do anything with them."

A mother rarely punishes except when she is in a temper—quite a wrong method. A child will do some wickedness one day, and be laughed at. The next he will do exactly the same thing, and, because his father or mother happens to be out of temper, he will receive a slap. This is not justice, and he knows it, and it is not the way to make him better.

I cannot be accused of unfair bias in the views I have expressed in this chapter, as enlightened French men and women agree that the methods of education and upbringing ought to be changed. A few years ago there appeared a very able article on the subject by a well-known woman writer in one of the reviews, and from time to time other writers have expressed their opinions to the same effect.

It will take years before any change can be made by the great bulk of the people. It will begin slowly (in some cases has already begun) in the upper classes, and gradually filter downwards, till every parent will realise that to “spare the rod and spoil the child” tends to the decadence of a race. Then France may become what she once was—the most brilliant, clever, witty, vital people of the world, producers of famous writers, soldiers, painters, architects, and wits.

“The childhood shows the man,
As morning shows the day.”

And there is no greater copyist than a child.

Some one once said that character was formed for good or for bad at nine, and there is a lot of truth in it.

There are few men strong and wise enough to see themselves as others see them, and then set themselves deliberately to change their natures.

If only the charming French mothers would let

the little ones have a chance. Poor wee things, they cannot be expected to see for themselves. It is as natural for a child to be naughty, disobedient, and selfish, as it is for a starving dog to steal a bone.

CHAPTER VI

SOME FALLACIES

I HEARD of an Englishman the other day who was waiting in an office in London to speak to his friend, the principal. As he went into his friend's private room, a black-bearded man came out. "That wasn't an Englishman, was it?" he asked. "No," was the answer. "He's a Frenchman, or one of those *fancy nationalities*!"

I wonder how many Englishmen look upon foreigners as "fancy nationalities"—a good many, I expect.

How many people come to Paris and go back wiser than when they came as to the qualities and nature of the Parisians? Very few. English and American tourists congregate in places seldom visited by the French, though they are under the impression that they are doing something "thoroughly Parisian"! They sit outside the Café de la Paix, go to the Moulin Rouge, and have supper at Maxim's—at all of which one hears more English spoken than French.

It is utterly impossible to know anything about the French unless one has lived in France.

There are a few fallacies that the English will hold to for ever.

How often has one heard the expression "a dirty Frenchman"? And it is not only a vaguely insulting adjective, it is meant literally. The French are personally dirty, that is what is thought. How far from the truth this is only those who know the French can say. I say most emphatically that the French *look* a clean race as far as outside appearances go.

If it is said that Paris is a decade behind England and America in the way of bathrooms, there I agree. It is only in the last few years that bathrooms have been added to flats—now every new house has its bathroom in every *appartement*. But where the mistake lies is in the ignoring of the fact that one can be fairly clean without a bath. It is a national prejudice, a prejudice that I own I share. No English person of the upper class feels clean without his morning bath. It is a lengthy operation and a messy one to wash "piece-meal," but the French have hitherto overlooked that, and if it takes a little longer, what does it matter? The day has many hours!

I will not aver that even this desultory washing takes place every day. But certainly the "parts

that show " are daily attended to very carefully ! So the Parisian never looks dirty.

It is an unpleasant subject to talk about—but I have never had a servant whom I have had to reprove for dirty neck or ears, and only once have I sat next to a person in an omnibus who was unpleasant in this way. Can one say the same in England ?

The Parisians, from the most humble *midinette* to the highest in the land, take care of their hair and hands. It is the rarest thing in the world to see an untidy coiffure, or ill-kept nails. One never sees holes in stockings, down-at-heel shoes, or ragged petticoats.

When Paris was new to me I, one day, saw an accident in the Champs Élysées—a young girl, hatless and gloveless, carrying a bandbox to some customer of her employer, was knocked down by a motor. She was not run over, but the mud-guard had hurt her arm, and she was half-fainting and crying weakly. She happened to be surrounded by men only, who looked awkward and helpless, so I went up to her and took charge. I led her across the road to a chemist's shop (chemists in France are trained for first aid), and I felt I could not leave her until I had seen if she were badly hurt. The man began to gently take off her bodice, and I shuddered with horrid anticipation. She was so pretty and dainty out-

side—what should I see underneath that fresh, clean blouse? Behold! most exquisitely neat underlinen, plain, but fine and white, a little lace edging, and blue ribbons run through. Charming white corsets too. I heaved a sigh of relief and thankfulness, and thought of a somewhat similar experience I had had once in London where the *dessous* was—well, I tried to forget it.

Since then I have had more experience, and I know that a Parisienne thinks as much, or more, of her lingerie as of her dress.

To return to baths. When I speak of the “piece-meal” washing I am speaking more particularly of the lower and lower-middle classes; the *haut monde* long ago discovered the delights of baths. An upper-class Frenchman would no more dream of omitting his morning “tuub” than an Englishman or American would, it is *de rigueur*; though even he will not take an “odd” bath—after a walk, for instance. Now the idea of, anyway, a weekly bath, is creeping down to the middle classes, and, as I said before, all new flats have their *salle de bains*. True, in some cases it is not used; some old-fashioned people consider that to undress altogether, even in strict privacy, is improper! In the provinces, to this day, rarely does the *jeune fille* take a bath without wearing a *chemise*! They prefer the lengthy process with a basin; but most landlords realise

that the ever-increasing demand must be catered for. There are still a few obstinate ones, however—I came across one when I was looking for a flat. I asked him if he would bring through the water pipes from the kitchen to a small room I wished to turn into a bathroom. He threw up his arms in dismay, and positively shrieked at me, “Bathroom! Bathroom! I will *never* have a bathroom in my house.” I tried to arrive at the reason for this uncalled-for excitement, but only received a vague impression that a bath must necessarily overflow and destroy everything in a devastating flood!

One flat I visited was occupied, and I asked the pretty little woman who received me whether there was a bathroom.

“Yes,” she said, with enthusiasm, “so convenient! It saves the servants so many journeys to the cellar.”

I was puzzled, but was enlightened when I saw the bath. It was full of coal!

Yet this woman’s bedroom was exquisitely dainty, and her dressing-room furnished with several elaborate appliances for washing—in bits.

But, as I have said, the prejudice against big baths is fast dying out, and I feel sure that it will not be long before the far quicker and pleasanter process of washing will spread right

down to the lowest classes, as it never has in England.

To sum up: The lower classes are infinitely cleaner and daintier in Paris than in London. The upper classes, though *tidier* than our compatriots, are not quite so rigorous as to daily baths, though I know many who are thoroughly "English" in this way.

Another fallacy is that the Parisian is cruel to animals. The cab-driver, in particular, is anathematised for his cruelty to his horse. In other parts of France there is a great deal of cruelty, but as far as Paris is concerned I deny the accusation most strongly, and, in case any one may doubt my point of view, I may say that I am considered a "faddist" where animals are concerned.

I do not say that a bad-tempered *cocher*, or a drunken one, is never to be seen—I have expostulated with cab-drivers here just as I have had to do occasionally in England—but what I do say is that the unnecessary beating of horses is rare. I have come to the conclusion that the great cracking of whips that goes on is what has deceived the Anglo-Saxon. A Parisian can no more help cracking his whip than he can help gesticulating when talking.

When a horse falls here there is no whipping it to try and make it rise—sometimes when rising

is an impossibility owing to the angle at which it lies—no, the driver gets down resignedly, and takes off the harness, wheels back the vehicle, and then helps up the animal.

Where I live at present my windows look out on a long incline, very difficult for horses to mount. Day after day I am surprised at the patience shown by the drivers of carts laden with heavy stone and girders for some building operations at the top of the hill. No beating goes on, the horses are pulled, and helped, and encouraged by that peculiar horse-language that every one of them seems to understand. Constantly the men let them rest, and pat and stroke their noses.

In hot summers, at the corners of many of the streets, are pails of water and large sponges, and many and many a time have I stood and watched drivers bathing their horses' heads and noses, and washing out their mouths. That there might be some drinking troughs, as in London, I agree, but the absence of them is the fault of the municipality, and I am sure no one would be more pleased at their installation than the average driver of both carts and cabs.

I acknowledge that the Paris cab-horse is not so fine as the London animal, but the *race* of horse is different, and they are fed differently. They seem a hardy lot on the whole, though, as a rule, they are not beautiful to look upon. I cannot

think that they are half-starved, as so many English people seem to think, for why should the cab-horse be picked out for starving when the cart-horses are so superb? In no city—no, not even London—have I seen such splendid specimens as the Paris cart-horses, from the lighter kind which the big shops employ for delivery of goods, to the immense beasts harnessed three, four, five, and six to the carts for stone-carrying. No one in his right senses, and who knows anything about horses, could dream for a moment that these were starved.

I recommend any one who has this prejudice against Paris to pass by the Louvre, Printemps, Bon-marché, or Galeries Lafayette shops in the afternoon, when the carts are waiting for the late delivery. The beautiful, glossy, well-groomed, and well-fed teams would convince the most rabid faddist. I mention these shops because, to the foreigner, they are the best known, but every big shop in Paris has the most marvellous collection of horses. Felix Potin's dappled greys are famous—and very, very often have I seen the drivers caressing and petting their horses. The other day I watched with delight a horse trying to get his nose into a driver's pocket, and the man pretending he knew nothing about the operation, till the horse, impatient, ceased trying for the impossible, lifted his head and nibbled the man's

ear—then he was kissed, and given the contents of the pocket !

The average Parisian is very fond of animals. His cat, his dog, his bird are part of his family, and he is very kind to them. Many cabmen have dogs which share their seats, and nothing pleases a *cocher* more than a kind word or a pat to his little companion.

My present concierge has a medal for kindness to animals, and his and his wife's hysteria one day when they thought one of their kittens was lost was pitiful.

It must be understood that I speak always of the Parisian. If there is ever any cruelty, nine times out of ten one will find that the man is a Southerner. I will not enter into the details of the slaughtering of animals and so on, which is far more humane in Paris than in London ; I have dealt only with domestic animals. I feel that it is but just to try and disabuse the mind of the Anglo-Saxon of the long-rooted conviction that the streets of Paris are a torture for animals—and for animal lovers.

I must mention, however, something that is certainly a disgrace to a civilised country. By an old law animals are not allowed to be killed in the streets. Consequently a horse, however badly injured, has to wait until the ambulance arrives. This is a very cruel and horrible thing, and I hope

that soon the law will be altered. *Le Matin* and, I believe, some other newspapers have taken the matter up. It is a strange anachronism that, in a country which has public executions, a suffering animal is not allowed to be put out of its pain for fear of offending the tender heart of the passer-by.

One more thing, a very important one to my mind—the bearing-rein (that disgrace of England) is practically *unknown* in Paris. In the carriages standing for hours outside shops you will very, *very* rarely see the horrible torture inflicted that you see in Bond Street every day of the week.

Having, I hope, done the Parisian justice as to two popular fallacies which are unflattering to him, I feel I must be equally just in one that is flattering. I refer to politeness.

The general impression in England and America is that the Parisian is a kind of Sir Walter Raleigh and Lord Chesterfield rolled into one! There must be a terrible disillusion in store for any one visiting Paris for the first time.

The Parisian is *not* polite. If an acquaintance meets you in the street he will stand with uncovered head till you bid him put his hat on; he will say the most delightful things to you, which make you feel purry-purry for the rest of the day; he has the loveliest bow in the world, and kisses your hand as if you were the only woman on earth who mattered; he will remember your fête day,

and send you divine flowers; he will put you into a cab, and tuck in your skirts as if the light of heaven were to be extinguished when you drove away—yes, the men you know will do all that. But—defend yourself as far as the stranger is concerned, for he certainly will not do it !

The middle-class Parisian in a hurry is the rudest thing in creation. He will push and shove, tread on your dress, knock your parcels and umbrella out of your hands, crush by you in a narrow space, and let you walk in the gutter sooner than inconvenience himself by one iota. As for giving up his place to you in a train or bus—why, such an idea rarely enters the head of the average *bourgeois*. There are exceptions, but I must own that, in the cases I have seen, the *raison d'être* has nearly always been a pretty woman.

I was in an omnibus one day, and at a stopping-place a crowd was waiting, each person with his little numbered card (a very good plan, by the way, otherwise I very much doubt whether women could *ever* enter trams and omnibuses at crowded times). The conductor called out the numbers, and each in turn, when called, mounted the steps. The last to take a seat was a little, delicate-looking, plain woman—a lady. Just as the conductor was calling “*complet*” a man outside bawled out, “I had seventy-one, you let some one in with seventy-two. I insist on my rights.”

“ You had seventy-two, Madame, hadn’t you ? This gentleman has seventy-one.”

Seventy-one was on the step now, peering in.

“ Yes, I have,” he shrieked, “ here’s my ticket.”

“ I’m very sorry, Madame,” said the conductor, “ I must ask you to let the gentleman have the seat.”

The meek woman descended, and Seventy-one took her place. I was boiling, but seemed to be the only person in the omnibus who thought there was anything unusual in the incident.

One more instance, which is somewhat amusing. One cold day a friend and I were the last numbers called, and mounted on a tram. There was one place inside (last but two to the door) and one on the platform. My friend insisted on my going inside as I had a cold. My friend and I exchanged one or two words about where we had to get down, then the man (a “ gentleman ”) seated next to the door bent forward to me and said, “ If you’d like to change places with me, Madame, you could talk to your friend.”

I purposely mistook the offer, thanked him charmingly, and called to my friend in French, “ Monsieur very kindly offers you his place, so come in.”

That man’s face was a study ! But he had to accept the situation and my friend’s innocently effusive thanks.

There was a smile on the face of every woman in that tram !

No, a Frenchman is the most charming man in the world, and he adores women—individually and *en bloc*—but he is not polite. And in Paris remember they have not the “excuse” of the suffragettes, an excuse I heard a man in England make for his rudeness to an old lady.

CHAPTER VII

THE FLÂNEUR

IF you are wise you will never try to hurry on the boulevards, because the boulevards are, by long custom, given up to the *flâneur*.

In England we have no equivalent for this word, stroller does not mean quite the same thing.

Walk along the boulevards any fine day from the Madeleine to the Faubourg Montmartre, and you will see hundreds of men strolling along as if there were no such thing as business in the world. They stop and look at the kiosks, they stop and look at the shops, they stop dead in the middle of the pavement to talk—and woe betide the person-in-a-hurry just behind, for he will certainly walk straight into the obstruction !

The Parisian never for a moment thinks that there is any one behind him—if he wants to stop, he does not glance back first, he just stops dead where he is. It is no uncommon sight to see two men, who have been strolling together talking earnestly, suddenly halt, facing one another, and proceed to gesticulate. One taps the other's

chest, the other spreads his hand out near his face, shaking it to and fro mysteriously. The necessary gesticulations finished, they stroll on again, only to repeat the operation a little farther on.

The Parisian has made an art of "*flâneing*." He looks thoroughly content when doing it, it seems to give him infinite satisfaction.

There is one curious thing about the boulevards—from the Madeleine nearly to the Place de l'Opéra the right-hand pavement is used, after that you cross over and continue on the other side ; coming back you do the same. No one has ever been able to explain this, but the fact remains that one side is crowded with *flâneurs*, and the other is practically deserted. This is a useful piece of information for the foreigner who wishes to hurry !

Nearly every shop has its little crowd before it. The paste-jewellery ones especially seem to attract by their glitter. There is one that has an eye-torturing invention of turning stands. There are two of these loaded with flashing "diamonds," each turns a different way, and the whole is illuminated by whirling electric lights. This window would drive any ordinary person into hysteria, but it is always surrounded by its circle of admirers.

Then there is another shop that is most fascinating—the Gramophone shop. You stare in at these windows, and this is what you see : A long shop

divided into four counters with high backs to them, in front of these counters are chairs, in front of each chair are two receivers, the long tubes of which are inserted in the high backs. On the counter before each chair is a book giving a list of operas, "pieces," songs, singers, and so on, and when you make your choice, you drop into a slit in the back a disc which you have bought beforehand, and turn a handle till you get the number you want. Then you lean back in your chair with the receivers to your ears and listen.

It is as good as a play to stand at the window of this shop and watch the people inside! A few—a very few—sit stolidly with no expression on their faces. A large number smile ecstatically, some laugh outright, and a great many nod their heads and pat their feet in time to the music. Now, in a theatre or at a concert, the audience is listening to the same thing, is moved by the same emotion—but here every person is listening to something different, and the play of expressions is most interesting.

The Maison de Blanc also attracts a good deal of attention with its beautifully-dressed windows under an arcade.

When any new shop is opened it is a nine days' wonder! The *flâneur* instantly notices it and swoops down upon it; from morning to night it is surrounded by a staring, chattering crowd.

Anything, apart from the shops, will attract the *boulevardier*. A crane is a great source of interest ; he will stand for half an hour at a time and watch the great arms swing out and down, and up again with their load.

A bill-sticker pasting bills on a high hoarding is another great attraction—if he is lowered by ropes from a dizzy height all the better—the pavement is packed tight with a silent throng, its face uplifted, its mouth open, gazing anxiously at the intrepid workman.

Even a new road or house in course of construction has its little cluster of admirers watching the horses dragging their loads through the opening in the hoarding, the unloading and loading of the carts, and so on.

If there is, by any good chance, an adjacent street barred to traffic owing to repaving, then indeed you can see the *flâneur* in all his glory. Here is allowed the cheap-jack with his little platform and his stool, and his patter collects *flâneurs* as jam collects flies.

They are wonderful, these street-sellers. How they talk ! They never stop, they seem to take in breath as they go along, like the corncrake. What they sell is usually a new invention—something, they assure the listeners, that they cannot possibly do without.

“Why,” I once heard one saying, “why are

you so cross in the morning? Why do you feel that life is not worth living? Why do you get more and more irritated as the day goes on?" (and so on and so on for ten minutes or so)—"Because, Messieurs, you have had difficulty with your tie, because that tie comes riding up all day long! Now see, this marvellous new invention! No more bad temper, no more swearing at your tie—you take it so, gentlemen, you turn your tie over so, you bring it back so, and there you are! You see—no more possibility of its coming untied, no more riding up. How did we ever live without it, gentlemen? My life is now worth living. I wonder how I could have gone on in those old days. Gentlemen, think of your poor wives—oh you, there, you laugh, you have no wife—of course not, you have no moustache yet—well, your mother, your sisters. You will have no more bad tempers if you use this wonderful little contrivance. Your women will welcome you back from business with joyful faces, because they will know that *your* faces will be happy and content. Five sous, gentlemen, twenty-five centimes for life worth living, only five sous! Thank you, sir, there you are, sir, full directions inside. And you, sir, thank you. Any more buyers for this wonderful invention? Why are you so cross in the mornings . . ." and then he began all over again.

Creams for cleaning boots and liquids for cleaning stuffs are great favourites with the sellers at these improvised stores. The former cleans over and over again the same boot; the latter has a pile of filthy rags by his side which he makes fair and spotless with his cleaner. And all the time they talk, talk, talk! And the crowd laughs, watches, and—buys. They do a great trade do these cheap-jacks.

You may see *flâneurs* on the boulevards in all seasons, and at all hours, from after lunch up to quite late at night. The busiest time is the *heure de l'apéritif*—five to seven. Then the pavements are crowded and cafés are packed to their utmost capacity, every one sitting at little round marble-topped tables on the *terrasses*, each one with his favourite drink before him—and strange and fascinating some of these drinks are. Two or three bottles are brought by the *sommelier* to make some concoction, a few drops of this, a spoonful of that, and a dash of the other, then the whole is filled up with iced water or *eau de seltz*.

Then *La Presse* comes out about a quarter to seven; the paper boys and men tear along shouting, and sous are got ready, arms are stretched out, and a sharp hiss is given to attract the man's attention; the damp sheet is handed hurriedly over the heads of people, and the man passes on,

yelling ungrammatically "*Le Presse.*" If there is a great debate in the Chamber, or a *drame passionnel*, then the excitement when the paper appears seizes hold of every one; each man buys his paper and glances at it, then he usually discusses the news with his neighbour. Apropos of papers—a Parisian does not throw his down when he has read it, he folds it up and puts it in his pocket—for are not old papers sold by his careful wife for a sou per eight pounds to the butcher?

If it starts raining the *flâneur* shelters in a doorway, and waits patiently, usually talking to his neighbour. The rain ceases—out he comes again to resume his stroll.

Cold makes no difference to our Parisian. Muffled up to the chin, he still takes his slow course along the pavements, he still stands and watches the little things that interest him.

From before Christmas to about the second week in January there is an added joy—the *baragues*. All down the length of the boulevards from the Madeleine to the Bastille are erected sheds in which are sold every single commodity from elaborate bronzes to a shoe-lace. Then indeed it is difficult to make any progression beyond a snail's pace. Every single *baraque* has to be visited, its prices compared with others, and the quality of its goods examined carefully. Every hundred yards or so is a lottery wheel, where you

buy your two sous' worth of rings and place them on the numbers you fancy. Then the wheel turns quickly, you heave a sigh, and buy some more rings. If you win you are presented with a cardboard tube of horrible sweets—but think of the joy of seeing your number turn up!

Of course this is only at Christmas time, but at all times of the year it is possible to see a little or big crowd forming a complete ring and watching intently some interesting performance in the centre. On fête days especially, the *flâneur* has many things to occupy his attention, and you may join him as he makes his rounds, and look over his shoulder. Here you will see a man showing off on the pavement the very newest mechanical toys: a bear turning slowly head over heels; a tin man running quickly with a tin barrow, his little legs moving so fast it is difficult for the eye to follow them; two tin acrobats on a tin trapeze; two tin wrestlers; and so on. The whole pavement is covered with the running, twisting, turning toys, and the crowd laughs, chatters, and occasionally buys.

Here is a group surrounding two or three “strong men,” their dirty shirts wet with perspiration as they lift the cannon-balls, balance the bars, and raise each other on one hand.

Here again is a silent, puzzled mass of people gazing round-eyed at a clairvoyante. I cannot

attempt to explain how this is done—it may be genuine, it may be a very clever “catch,” but it is certainly *intrigante*. A woman sits on a little stool, carefully blindfolded. That she really is blindfolded I have assured myself. A man goes about in the crowd, you give him a few sous, and he turns to the woman and says: “Describe this person”—that is all he says, and it must be remembered that *cette personne* has no gender in French. She proceeds to describe the inquirer’s costume in all particulars, and will answer any questions. An Englishman whispered to the man, “Ask her where I did my military service.” The man said only, “Where did Monsieur do his military service?” Without a moment’s hesitation came the answer: “He never served!”

On *mardi gras* in the Champs Élysées there are several of these clairvoyantes, and the *flâneur* is delighted.

From all I have said it must not be supposed that the *flâneur* takes notice only of events. The passer-by of the opposite sex is always of interest to him, but I have dealt with this fully in another chapter.

And who are these *flâneurs*? may be asked.

They belong to every class. The old clubman strolling down to his usual afternoon gamble, dramatists, journalists, and writers of all sorts, *fonctionnaires*, business men, *petits rentiers*, *boursiers*,

“sportsmen,” artists, retired shopkeepers, actors, *vieux militaires*, and hundreds of others make up this motley throng.

And what do they talk about? First and foremost their own affairs—the most interesting of all topics to a Parisian—politics, the theatre, the races, the bourse, their health (a subject of never-ceasing interest!), the “little adventures” of themselves and their friends and their enemies, the chances of Monsieur X getting the red or violet ribbon, and the influences that are at work for and against, the latest funny story, and the various little odds and ends that make up their happy, and, from an English point of view, uneventful existences.

And how far are they right? Listening in passing to these little broken bits of conversation, and watching the childlike open smiles of talker and listener, it “gives one furiously to think” as to whether it is not better perhaps to talk lightly, live lightly, and *flâner*, instead of worrying over the future, and hustling all joy out of life; for

“Each day brings some petty dust
Our soon-choked souls to fill,”

and it is of no use to go sweeping out the corners of unhappiness to add a little more dust to that which we cannot help.

Say what you will, the *heure de l'apéritif* has its great charm, and goes to the making up of the *joie de vivre* of the Parisian. Compare this stroll

along the boulevards to the London hour when business ceases, with its crowds of harassed, black-coated men tearing home by omnibus or tube, with their noses glued to a leader in an evening paper—which are the happier ?

And so the *flâneur* lives, year in, year out, the same two or three hundred yards of boulevard for his happy hunting-ground, the same café for the *consommation* of the same drink—on the *terrasse* in the spring, summer, and autumn, inside when it is really cold. And when at length he joins the great army of *flâneurs* that has gone before him, he would probably die perfectly happy if he knew that his favourite journal, in the few lines devoted to his disappearance, would contain the traditional phrase: *Il était un boulevardier des plus connus.*

CHAPTER VIII

CONCIERGES AND SERVANTS

THE most abused person in Paris is undoubtedly the concierge. You will rarely find a Parisian who has one word of praise for the Government, the postal arrangements, or the concierge—all three share his wrath, which he is not in the least chary of expressing to any one who will listen to him.

Personally I think that all the terrible things said about the doorkeeper are undeserved. If he is treated well he usually treats the tenant well. It is occasionally necessary to have one loud-voiced dispute with him—you have to speak loudly in Paris, low-toned vituperation is no earthly use; the sooner this is done after moving into your flat the better. After this he will be meek, and it is not usually necessary to complain again.

That there are some concierges who are horribly disagreeable and ill-natured I will not deny—every class has its impossible units—but, taking the race of concierges as a whole, I do not think

it is any worse than the generality of human beings. To hear a Parisian talk you would think that concierges were a special breed of man, invented purposely for the confusion and misery of the householder. That the race is exceedingly greedy I acknowledge, but I have failed to find a class in Paris which is not. If one wants anything done by any one, the hand has to go to one's pocket, and I do not see that in this respect the concierge is any worse than others. If he is not tipped he will make himself objectionable, but that is a trait that he holds in common with the rest of his countrymen. The best thing is to give him a certain small percentage of the rent, paying him his bonus each quarter when he presents the receipt for the rent. Then on New Year's Day there is the habitual "little present." For the foreigner it is better to count this as part of the rent—if you see a flat of the rental of £100, say to yourself that it is £106; it is very simple. After all you pay nothing for the concierge, and it is undoubtedly a comfort to know that no one can enter your flat in the night unknown to you.

It is not the most delightful of all occupations, this one of guarding a house, one must remember. To be rung up at all hours of the night is not exactly an amusement one would choose. This disadvantage, to my mind, hardly compensates him for the somewhat lazy day.

He has to rise early, as the dustmen come round every morning between six and seven (sometimes earlier) to empty the bin, and it has to be put out in time. In some quarters of Paris the bin is put on the pavement the night before, but this is by no means universal. Then the early milk comes for the various flats. Madame la concierge cleans her *loge*, while her husband sweeps the staircases, and it must not be forgotten that there are sometimes two grand staircases, and two for tradesmen, besides the sixth floor which is inhabited by the servants of the various flats. He then washes the yard and the pavement outside the door, polishes the brass handles, and so on. In the midst of this cleaning he has the early post to take up to the tenants. In Paris the postman leaves the letters in the *loge*, the concierge sorts them and delivers them night and morning at each door. I have heard harrowing tales of letters kept back by a spiteful concierge, but I am glad to say my personal experience has made me discredit them.

In the afternoon and evening the concierge and his wife gossip with their neighbours, in summer sitting outside the door. I must admit that they are the greatest gossips in the world. I do not believe that any single happening is unknown to them, and all the personal affairs of the tenants are discussed *ad nauseam*—but what does it matter ?

Personally, it does not give me immense uneasiness, as it seems to do to so many people. I cannot conceive why it should upset one's digestion to know that a few concierges are interesting themselves in one's concerns.

The landlord of every house that consists of flats is bound by law in Paris to employ a concierge, and the doors are shut at night. Every *locataire* who rings has the cord which releases the lock pulled for him from the lodge, and has to give his name as he passes in. In my experience I have never found a concierge who was careless in this matter. If the person who rings does not give his name he is certain to hear a voice calling after him, " Who is it ? "

This is the reason why burglaries are rare in Paris flats. In the few cases there are it is proved that the burglar has either secreted himself in the daytime in some obscure corner of the house, or has entered by one of the windows of the roof.

If you are considerate to the concierge you will usually find that he is ready to do his best to make you comfortable. He delivers your letters regularly, carries up any parcels you may have, and so on.

Occasionally the servants are at loggerheads with him, but it seems to me that servants and concierges are born to quarrel, and it is wiser for the tenant to take no notice of these storms. If

his servant complains about the concierge—it is often a most agonising tale—let him say, “Dear, dear, how terrible. It is annoying for you!” and so on—and do nothing. A little sympathy goes a long way. It is almost better for your servants to dislike the concierge than to be bosom friends, as in the latter case they spend many gossiping minutes during the day in the lodge, and there is a limit to what one likes discussed with one’s doorkeeper!

It is as well to be on good terms with this “watcher on the threshold,” as it must not be forgotten that his word is law. If, for instance, dogs are not allowed in the house, and a friend calls accompanied by his canine friend, the concierge is quite within his rights if he forbids the friend the entry. But, if you have made yourself agreeable, it is possible for that dog to be invisible! Do not forget that the Parisian is touched by small things—I once won the heart of a notoriously sulky female concierge by giving her a rose.

They have hearts, these terrible dragons, though many Parisians will deny it. When I was going through tortures of anxiety some years ago, owing to the dangerous illness of one very near and dear to me, the concierges came up every day to inquire, and, if there was a consultation of specialists, they would wait till the doctors had gone, then mount to the kitchen to ask for the

verdict. Once, when the verdict was "No hope," Madame la concierge was discovered by my cook sitting on the back stairway crying.

No, they are human like the rest of us, and it is stupid to believe everything one hears. I have been told many times by friends that the reason they live in hotels is because they dread taking a flat for fear of the terrible concierges.

I have headed this chapter "Concierges and Servants," and no book, however slight, on Paris would be complete without reference to our cooks, *femmes de chambre*, and valets.

It is not considered a disgrace in France to be a servant, and the idea that it is more pleasant to work in a factory than to go out to service would be laughed at. There is no difficulty in procuring servants, and it is as well, as the notice given on either side is but a week, instead of a month as in England. The wages also are considerably higher. The lowest wage for which one can engage a respectable housemaid is twenty-four pounds a year, and twenty-eight pounds is the usual payment. For a plain cook it runs about the same. Valets de chambre gain about forty to forty-eight pounds. A general servant—suitable, *bien entendu*, for a gentleman's family—twenty to twenty-eight pounds. It must also be remembered that wine is given as well, but this is not a serious item in the land of cheap wines.

But I must own to a prejudice in favour of the Parisian servant. As a rule, they are delightful creatures, and will do anything for a good mistress. A maid is ready to run out on errands at any hour ; she goes out always without her hat, unless she is going a long distance by tram or train, and her apron is not considered by her a “ badge of servitude ” as it seems to be in England. The cook always does her morning shopping hatless and aproned. There is no argument as to what is or is not “ their work ” ; the cook will help with the drawing-room, or will aid the maid with needlework if she is pressed for time, and the maids will help the cook. All this, if they are good friends, be it understood. If there are quarrels in the kitchen, may the fates protect you !

There is no question of “ My night out ”—it is not known. After the servants have done their work at night it is not the habit to inquire what they do ; they can go out or go up to their rooms. All servants’ rooms are on the sixth floor in Paris, and they lock the tradesmen’s entrance and mount to their rooms by the *escalier de service*. I know that this is considered extraordinary by the conventional Englishwoman, but personally I have never noticed any inconvenience accruing from it. Occasionally a servant will ask for leave to go out for shopping in the afternoon, but it is very rare. As for a cook being

out for any meal—it is unknown. The Sunday-night supper is an exclusively English institution.

Housemaids, valets, and parlour-maids are excellent when they have once learnt your “little ways.” It requires some talk to make a parlour-maid or valet realise that our ideas and theirs do not coincide as to the little refinements of the table. But they are improving rapidly, as now a number of French consider it quite *chic* to eat *à l’Anglaise*. The old idea of “food, food, nothing but food” is dying out amongst the better class, and the niceties of table furnishings are gradually claiming their votaries, though there is still immense room for improvement.

I was showing a new maid how to lay the table once, and the table-centre and the flowers surprised her. She thought it amiable eccentricity on my part to put the forks face upwards instead of backwards, as they are always arranged in Paris. Dessert spoons and forks she considered “amusant,” fish knives and forks “comique.” But, as we were but two at table, four small silver salt-cellars and pepper-casters made her grin widely, though she made no remark.

Ten minutes afterwards I went into the dining-room again, and found *one* salt-cellar and caster left on the table. I called her, and asked where the others were. She waved towards the sideboard. “I put them away,” she answered

brightly. "Madame doubtless forgot that there are but two for dinner. What would be the use of so many little things cumbering up the table!!"

Even the best of servants have to be positively nagged at before they will learn to keep their silver clean, and innate economy ordains that a tablecloth *ought* to last a week.

But for all these little failings, how lovable they are, these French maids. What an interest they take in your appearance, and in your friends, in your goings and comings. They will ask how you enjoyed your theatre or party of the night before, who was there, and what they wore. They will usually wind up with the confident declaration: "I'm sure Madame looked nicer than any one!" If you buy a new hat or blouse, and the parcel comes while you are out, it will be opened, and your maid's approval or disapproval will be announced on your return. Sometimes their taste is excellent. I always regret it if I keep something my present maid declares is unbecoming! They will walk round you before you go out, and pat and pull here and there, suggest a brooch which they think may add to your charms, and generally supervise your appearance. My maid calmly said to me one day, "I don't like that *jabôt* Madame wears in the mornings; it makes Madame look ugly. I shall hide it"—and she did! (This maid is distinguished above all

others to my mind in that she always sleeps with her window open—an unheard-of eccentricity !)

All this without a hint of disrespect. One can discuss all sorts of subjects with a Parisian servant, and she remains always respectful. One can talk quite “chummily” with her one moment, and scold her for a neglected duty the next. I have never once received any impertinence from my servants.

As far as I can make out every class of French servant shares a passion for *saucers*. I have seen a breakfast-tray, the service of which was entirely made up of odd saucers. The coffee and milk jugs stood on them, the sugar, bread, and butter were on others. I have never been able to get any explanation for this extraordinary *penchant*, though I have often tried. If one demands a glass of milk it is brought one on a saucer ; a biscuit, a piece of bread and butter, a wineglass—anything ; each and every thing is brought on saucers. Small plates and silver salvers are anathema to the average servant. It takes months to break them of the saucer habit.

It also takes a long time to instil into their minds that salvers are for use, not ornament ; they are used in very few French houses. One of my French friends lives in a palatial house and employs many footmen, and it gives one rather a shock when one of these uniformed valets takes one's

cards in his *fingers*! I have also seen letters handed in the fingers, but this is becoming rarer.

When one valet is kept in French houses he always (at least I have never seen otherwise) appears to open the door, bring in tea, etc., in an apron—it does *not* look nice! Valets are sometimes employed as housemaids—a ménage (husband and wife) will take a place together as valet and cook; in that case the man does all the housework. I suppose it is a mere silly English prejudice to object to this arrangement, but I confess I do not care about it.

The *bonne à tout faire* in Paris is a wonder, and it seems impossible to call her a general servant, connecting that as one does with the smutty, incapable person in England. They are marvellous workers, and really some people who employ but one servant seem to get more done than others who employ two or more. This genius keeps a flat of four or five rooms spotlessly clean, does the marketing, cooks a three- or four-course lunch, and a five-course dinner every day, is “dressed” in the afternoon, and waits at table. She also finds time to do the mending of the household, and very often a good deal of washing. This is no exaggeration on my part. I have sometimes known people for months before I found out that they had but one servant, and have been hardly able to credit it. Servants in Paris

do not spend all they earn on dress as they do in England. They have *one* hat for best, and a neat dress. They never ape their mistress. One *femme de chambre* I had asked permission to go to a ball given by her "Society," and, before she went, she came to me without an atom of self-consciousness. She was charming in a black skirt and neat white high blouse; she wanted nothing better.

Many people in Paris with small flats keep no servant at all. The *femme de ménage* is a great institution. This also is impossible to translate as "charwoman" as known in England—those women "who are always cleaning and never clean." The *femme de ménage* costs fifty centimes an hour, and many people employ one to come for the mornings only, to serve the early coffee, clean the flat, and prepare *déjeuner*. Then they dine out at some restaurant suited to their means.

These women are of a very respectable class; very often they have been servants in good houses, and now add their quota to their household earnings, husband and wife meeting only in the evenings when both their employments have ended for the day.

Of all servants, cooks present the greatest difficulty to the mistress. The method of housekeeping in Paris is totally different from that in England,

and there is enormous possibility of dishonesty. I am sorry to say that cooks as a race are abominably dishonest.

The marketing in Paris is done by the cook each morning, and enough food bought for the day only—there are no larders in Paris flats. In small households the mistress gives a certain sum of money each day to the cook, and she presents her account-book for scrutiny every morning. An iniquitous custom in France is the *sou de franc*; this is a five-per-cent. commission which the tradesmen give to the cook on all goods bought. Naturally the cook, who, like all the French, has the saving mania, strives to accumulate as many sous as possible. Thus she will not buy provisions at shops which give no commission, such as Felix Potin's, nor at the perambulating carts which congregate in every busy centre with cheap vegetables, fruit, and so on. This is not all—it is impossible for every mistress to be *au courant* with the daily prices of every commodity, and the dishonest cook can make several francs a day in a good place. Naturally the bigger the household expenses the more the cook can make. It is of no use trying to stop this method of robbery. I have known many instances where furious Anglo-Saxons have started weekly books sent direct from the tradesmen—the cook leaves. One cook told my maid that she was leaving Monsieur So-and-so's

as she found she could not make *more than five francs a day* out of him !

A bachelor friend of mine once brought me round his cook's book to look at. He "thought," poor man, that he was "spending rather a lot." I am used to the little ways of these ladies, but even I opened my eyes in surprise when I went over that book. I took a pencil, altered the prices to the correct ones, deducted *seventeen francs* in one week, and told my friend to return the book without a word. . . . His cook promptly gave her eight days' notice !

My maid told me an amusing instance of a cook's genius for money-making. She was in a large house where ten servants were kept. The cook in question was a male one. One night there was a dinner-party, and the *chef* surpassed himself in an exquisite game soufflé. One of the men came back to the kitchen with a message of congratulation to him from Monsieur le duc (one of the guests). "Oh," cried Mr. Cook, "I've charged too little for that ; if Monsieur le duc likes it the master will be pleased." Then he got his account-book out and corrected it, adding ten francs to the total !

We English can never get accustomed to this method of cheating, but it is useless to kick against the pricks. It is not considered dishonest in France ; dishonesty means *stealing*, and to charge

five francs for a three-franc article is not stealing according to the ideas prevailing. A cook who has regularly cheated you out of many francs per day, and which you can prove, can bring an action against you if you say she is dishonest !

Every householder in France is bound by law to give a certificate to the servant who is leaving him ; this is stamped by the police, and, when a servant applies for a place, he or she goes supplied with these certificates. It is rare to get a personal character ; most people think they have done all that is necessary in writing one, and they object to be worried with interviews. It is infrequent not to find “ honest ” inscribed amongst the attributes of the applicant—it means absolutely nothing.

It is perfectly scandalous the deceit exhibited in these written characters. One cook I engaged had most wonderful certificates ; she was everything that was perfect according to all her employers. She certainly was a superb cook—her *plats* were fit for the gods—but very little time passed before we found out that she was a very bad drunkard—not drunk occasionally, but every day, and all day, from eight o’clock in the morning. She also robbed me wholesale—not *stealing*, of course !

You may not tell the truth in these written characters ; your only weapon is silence. You are by law obliged to write only the date when the servant entered your service and the date she left.

Naturally if one of these "short and sweet" certificates is amongst the applicant's papers she suppresses it, and, if you inquire where she was in the time between two dates, she will say "with her people, taking a rest."

The whole system is wrong, and needs revising. Every one grumbles, but nothing is done. You must put up with the oft-repeated process of finding out the tartar you have caught and dismissing her. Luckily there is no difficulty in replacing her; when you give out you require a servant you will receive applications for the place all day long.

If you do by any chance go to the last mistress for a personal reference, it needs severe cross-examination to get the truth out of her. You will have to swear that you will not mention it to the servant—then maybe a tale of horror comes out. If you ask why the certificate was good the lady will shrug her shoulders and answer, "What will you? A friend of mine had an action brought against her the other day. One must be so careful!"

But one thing I must add. It is a curious thing that, though the French servants will cheat as much as they safely can, they are not thieves. Doubtless a nice discrimination, but it is so. You can leave money and jewellery about, and will never find one thing disappear. I lock up

nothing, and, though I may know that my cook, every evening when she writes her accounts, is cudgelling her brains as to where she can add on a few sous, I feel quite secure, nothing will be stolen. For cheating is not thieving in this city of fine distinctions !

CHAPTER IX

STREET-SELLERS

SOME foreigners say, "What a nuisance all these *camelots* and people are!" These grumblers cannot be interested in the "moving row of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go"—otherwise life. For every single one of these "*camelots* and people" are interesting, each in his own way. In no city have I seen such an extraordinary variety of street-sellers as in Paris, and in no other city do they sell in exactly the same way. In London they stand by the side of the pavement with their little trays, and cry continually in a raucous voice the merits and prices of their goods. If it is a mechanical toy, they exhibit its perfections as well as they can in the circumscribed space at their disposal, for the pavement itself is forbidden ground. In Paris there is so much more room for everything, and the police have not to be so severe. Any day in the Place de la Concorde you can see a little group of persons standing watching a man winding up his toys and setting them marching on the asphalt. And not only

in this huge *place*, but in the streets also. A man with a box slung over his shoulder will suddenly stoop, you will hear a little purring noise, will look down, and there, running along at your feet is a funny little tin person with a wheelbarrow, or a duck with an exaggerated waddle.

As a rule, they say nothing, these men. They just look at the toys admiringly, and appear to be playing with them for their own amusement. If you ask the price they will say indifferently, "Trente neuf sous," wind up another, and set it pacing in the wake of its companions. You cannot bargain with them. If you offer thirty sous they will shrug their shoulders and answer, "Impossible, Monsieur," and stoop to add a performing bear or a clown to the collection.

Another toy which has been a favourite for years is the jumping rabbit, manipulated by pressing the bulb at the end of a tube. You may be sitting quietly at a table outside a café, when suddenly beside your drink will appear the softest, furriest bunny in the world, which gives a little ecstatic hop and then goes on to the next table. You are not pressed to buy—you are just shown the animal's charms; if you are not fascinated, that is your loss !

Another seller for whom I have a great affection is the man with the puppy. He walks along in front of the cafés, and in the crook of his arm

is a dear little white puppy with black ears, which barks shrilly, moves his head, and waves his paws in a frantic struggle to get free. That his skin is hollow, and of calico, and his flesh but the loaned flesh of a man's hand it is difficult to believe. The first time I saw him I simply had to buy him, he was so very lovable.

There is one seller whom I do not like, the man who walks along with a minute wooden cage, in which there are two tiny birds which come out on to a stick when it is held to them.

I knew a great big English soldier who was so sorry for these birds that he bought up every one he could see, procured a huge cage for the lot, and took them home with him. I never heard what became of them. I have also never been able to find out what is the matter with these wee feathered things—I know only that there is something about them that depresses me; they look unnatural.

I love to watch foreigners outside a café when a man wends his way in and out of the tables deftly, placing before each person a sweet, which he extracts from a bag with a pair of dainty tongs. They look at each other in astonishment, and very, very rarely do they eat the sweet! I often wonder what they think; whether their idea is that the man is some wholesale poisoner who takes this method of sweeping away mankind,

or whether they are convinced that if they eat they will be forced to buy.

When the man has gone the length of the *terrasse* he starts the rounds again, this time exhibiting his box of sweet-packets. He says nothing, just looks at each person as he passes. If you have found the sample good you call him, and buy a fifty-centime or a franc packet.

Then there is the man with olives. A nice clean bucketful of olives with a handle across the top, a wooden shovel, and cones of paper are his stock-in-trade, and he always does a good business. The French see nothing *infra dig.* in buying olives and eating them in public. Nor nuts—the nut-seller follows the same operations as the sweet-man. One is placed in front of each *consommateur*, cracked, and eaten with enjoyment; then, on the seller reappearing, a two-sou packet is bought.

You may be reading a paper or talking, sipping your *syrop* or *vermouth*, and you will hear at your elbow, “Shut your eyes and choose one. Only a sou. Always true.” You look up and see a smiling young or old woman, or a man—whichever it is they always smile. In their hand is a collection of queer little slips of coloured paper. If curiosity forces you to produce a sou, “shut your eyes and choose,” you will find the coloured paper is printed with exciting prophecies as to your future.

I used to know an old man who sold these fortune

slips. It was when I lived in the heart of the city, and a relation and myself used to take our afternoon *consommation* every evening at the same café. Each day this old, old shrivelled man came round with his slips, and each day I gave him a sou for good-fellowship's sake. He could not talk, this old man, he had no tongue, or no palate. He used to make queer grunty noises to attract my attention, and smile on me with a twisted, pathetic smile. One day I saw him searching amongst the tables, and holding something very carefully under his coat. When he saw me he shambled up and laid a lovely red rose in my lap, grunting and smiling as hard as he could. "For me?" I cried. "Um, Um," affirmatively. Then he shuffled off, *not waiting* for his sou! I nearly cried with the pathos of it. A short time after that I left the neighbourhood. About a year after I was sitting at the same café when I saw my old man going from table to table with his everlasting slips. Then he came to mine. When he saw me the slips fell to the ground, and he gave vent to an extraordinary outburst of grunts. I knew he wanted to know where I had been all that time, so I told him I had moved to a different quarter of Paris. He stooped, and sadly picked up his "fortunes," shook his old head, and began to move away. I called him back and gave him a franc. He made a *gratitude* noise, but he did not smile.

We, who had titles for all our street friends, used to call him the "afflicted nobleman," there was something in his knarled old face that was aristocratic.

At this same café we often bought flowers from a hump-backed boy with an exceedingly intelligent open face—his sister, by the way, sold "fortune slips"; we would often talk to him, and he told us his whole life. When I moved I did not see him again for about two years, then one day, far away from that quarter, I saw him selling violets. I wondered whether he would remember me, and stood in front of him. I ought not to have had any doubts! In an instant his hand shot out and wrung mine heartily. Oh, dear Anglo-Saxon reader, *do* imagine an English street-seller shaking hands with you! I asked after his health, and after his sister, and I had to tell him all my news too. Then I said I would buy a fifty-centime bunch of violets. He turned away from me as he wrapped them in paper, and only on my return home did I discover that he had given me two bunches!

I have not seen him now for such a long time. Alas! he was so delicate, I fear sometimes that he may have gone to those other flowers in the Elysian fields.

Pessimists may say that the old man's rose, and the boy's bunch of violets were both given with a very clever eye to business, but I like to keep

my little illusions. I persist in thinking that the "afflicted nobleman" and the delicate hump-back had a queer affection for the woman who talked to them.

Almost every article of commerce is sold in the streets of Paris. There is the smart young man who appears at your table with a black box of jewellery (save the mark !). He will place a ring or a chain in front of you, step back, and gaze at it with overwhelming admiration. You shake your head, and he looks at you pityingly, as though he longed to say, "Poor woman ! Do you really mean to say you are not going to take advantage of this extraordinary opportunity ?"

There is the man or woman who sells small framed pictures.

Algerians who stand silently in front of you, draped in rugs and furs for sale, and who look at you out of dark, pleading eyes.

The people who sell furniture—yes, *furniture* ! small tables, stools, pedestals, carved in cheap woods.

Then, in summer, there is an enormous trade in fans. "Les petits vents du nord." To and fro in front of the cafés they go, men, women, and children, all calling softly, "Who has not a little north wind ? Buy a little north wind. Two sous, the little north wind."

The Italian boys with their plaster statuettes

are very interesting. We used to have great fun with one of these, a brown shrimp of boy with black, merry eyes. He would show us a statuette. "How much?" we would say. "Eight francs." "I will give you ten sous."

Like a flash the brown hand would come forward, and place the thing on our table.

"Done!" and the gleaming white teeth and sparkling eyes made a delicious picture—a picture we were so fond of seeing that every servant or concierge I had was presented with a plaster statuette!

I have treated in another chapter of the street-sellers who put up stands whenever a road is up, and there sell every commodity one can need. I am dealing here more particularly with the people who sell in front of the cafés, and the things they sell are numerous.

Of course, the paper vendors are counted by hundreds, and guide books, post cards, and maps have a large sale in front of the cafés frequented by provincials and foreigners. These, too, the vendor frequents who wishes to sell a certain class of post card. You will see him stop in front of English or American men, look round to see no policeman is near, then bend forward with a screening newspaper in his hands, and show what it hides. I advise Englishwomen who see these furtive operations to ask no questions. I saw

one of my countrywomen once bend forward from a near-by table to peer round the edge of the paper—she did not cool down for some time afterwards.

Another favourite stock-in-trade is old illustrated papers. The offices sell off the comic journals to these vendors at a very cheap rate, and they go round selling several copies for two sous, and they do a very good business too—a Parisian likes to buy a franc's worth of picture-papers for two sous !

Strictly speaking, street performers do not come under my heading of "sellers," but I think a few words about them will not be amiss.

You may be seated peacefully on some *café terrasse*, and suddenly you will see three men appear with a roll of carpet, which they proceed to lay down on the pavement. Coats are discarded, and piled neatly beneath a tree, then two begin a performance, while the third keeps his eyes open for the police. If an *agent* is seen he whistles, and in a moment the carpet is rolled up, coats put on, and the three move away nonchalantly. But if uninterrupted, you will see the whole "show," and will (I hope) drop your contribution into the collection-hat when it is passed round.

Some of these performances are quite clever. Strong men, gymnasts, conjurers, mimics, plastic-

posers—every kind of exhibition have I seen given on the pavement of the Paris streets. Sometimes it is a concert! A lady with a large waist and larger bust will sing to the accompaniment of a portable piano, or a man will play a penny whistle or a cornet.

The good-natured customers watch or listen with interest, and the waiters stand with grins on their faces while the show lasts. If the warning whistle sounds there is a sigh of disappointment.

They make a very good living, these itinerant musicians and performers, it is very, very rare to see the hat pass any table without the sous dropped in. A Parisian, though he is the most economical man in the world, is extraordinarily charitable with his sous to the street-seller, performer, or beggar. "Indiscriminate charity," as some people are fond of labelling it, is the Frenchman's method of giving help. I know many Parisians who keep sous in a special pocket for distribution—the only money they ever keep loose. It is enlightening to stand near a licensed beggar for ten minutes or so and watch the passers-by—nearly every man will give him something. No wonder that the beggars are rich in Paris, as one always hears.

Of course, a great many of the street-vendors make selling an excuse for begging, just as in England. A few pencils held in the hand are a screen, and the police can say nothing. Not that they are very

severe in Paris. I am thankful to say I have never seen any one taken up for begging. However, there are very strict laws against begging (except for those who have a begging license—usually cripples), which are abrogated only on certain days—New Year's Day, the *Fête Nationale*, *Mi-Carême*, for instance, when, as I shall say elsewhere, the beggars come out in their thousands. On these days they beg openly.

But street-sellers, whether genuine or not, increase and flourish, and—though a few chronic grumblers may say that they are a nuisance—for me, I think they add enormously to the delights of Paris.

STUDENTS ON MARDI-GRAS.



CHAPTER X

STUDENTS AND STUDIOS

“ I earned no more by a warble
Than you by a sketch in plaster;
You wanted a piece of marble,
I needed a singing-master.

“ We studied hard in our styles,
Chipped each at a crust, like Hindoos,
For air looked out on the tiles,
For fun watched each other's windows.”

THE Latin quarter may be spoilt, as people are so fond of saying. The “ idle rich ” may have completely destroyed the charm of the good old days of the *Vie de Bohême*, as Murger loved to depict it. The “ one coat between us, and pool the last sous ” may have vanished together with the Rudolphes, the Marcells, and the Mimis—but there are still numberless persons who “ chip at a crust, like Hindoos,” and “ for air look out on the tiles.”

The pessimists—that race, which given the choice of two evils, chooses them both—will persist in saying that the *joie de vivre* has gone with the possibility of “ living on nothing a year.”

It is not so. That "the quarter" is not what it was every one must acknowledge. It has, to a great extent, been spoilt by the non-worker—people who have no gifts, and no desire to do anything, but who take a studio because they think it "such a lark to be really Bohemian"! I know an American woman, who has more dollars than brains, who installed herself in a gorgeous studio, and gave receptions to her rich friends from the *rive droite*.

Other Americans, who come over to study singing (and their name is legion), think the "atmosphere so encouraging," and hire *appartements* in the midst of the busy hive of workers.

But notwithstanding these people—who could no more clean their own rooms and cook their own food than they could live without air—notwithstanding the shirkers, the amateurs, and the ignorant, the Latin quarter keeps its own peculiar style, and many, many men and women live hard-working, happy, Bohemian lives.

Any evening stroll in the Boul' Miche or Luxembourg Gardens will show you hundreds of "real" students, students whose clothes have changed little since Murger wrote his famous book—enormously wide corduroy trousers narrowing to the feet, velveteen or alpaca jacket, soft shirt, turned-down collar, immense flowing tie, and slouch hat. You may see them any day carrying their food

home to be prepared by a Mimi—a bottle of wine, a paper parcel, and a yard of bread.

They stop now and then to greet a friend. If they are in funds they will go to the Café d'Harcourt or the Panthéon and have an *apertif*. If they are momentarily rich they will take Mimi to dinner to one or other of these, or another restaurant, where they will probably be joined by others with their Mimis, and the fun will be fast and furious.

There is also a large artist colony in Montmartre, and these men differ in no wise from their confrères across the river. When "anything is on" they join forces, and, of course, many of them belong to the schools of "the quarter." They are lucky in one thing—their life has not been spoilt by the "idle rich." Montmartre is not the fashion with that type of person.

Even when they possess evening clothes (and many of them do nowadays), they have a distinctive cut which denotes the artist.

How delightfully unself-conscious and unaffected they are too. They love having visitors to see the great work's progress, but their motto is—"You must take me as you find me."

Some friends and I tapped at the studio door of a young and gifted sculptor the other day. He opened it an inch, and we caught a fleeting vision of a dishevelled sweater. "One moment!" he cried, and shut the door, to open it again shortly

to welcome us. He had put on a coat, and his little model was standing by the stove in a hastily donned cloak. Her bare feet gave her away.

It was dusk, and tea-time—we were too considerate to visit him while light meant industry. He offered us tea, and Mimi (the model is often the Mimi) put the kettle on. We sat on stools (very plastery) and packing cases, and we had tea out of odd cups, and cakes from a paper bag. How out of place silver and fine china would have been.

These picnics in studios are most enjoyable. Many and many an one have I revelled in, when I have been sitting for my portrait. I have often taken in contributions in the way of eggs, meat, and cheese, and, laughing like school-children, we have prepared a lunch on the ever-useful stove. That the plates and cutlery had to be washed up between each course only added to the fun.

They are dears, these students, I love them all. So young, so fresh, so ever-ready to see the fun of life. So hopeful of the future, so enthusiastic over the last new picture or clay figure. So excited when they are “accepted,” so furious when refused. So ready to congratulate a more fortunate chum, or console another who is unlucky. And oh, so charitable to “a pal in a hole”! Bless all their sweet, spontaneous hearts, say I,

and let the pessimists who think the *Vie de Bohême* is dead, grizzle in their own corners.

There are a few cases where spontaneity does not exist. In its place is a frantic striving after the real thing. I must say that these are usually not French.

I was asked once to the studio of a woman painter whose dead husband had been a famous artist. She was not French and she was not an Anglo-Saxon—more I do not wish to say.

The studio was beautiful, full of lovely drapery, screens, old chairs, and exquisite pictures. In the centre stood a genuine Louis xv. four-post bed, carved in deep black oak, and piled with covers and cushions. Alas! Madame and her friends thought it would be truly Bohemian to be in fancy dress (in the afternoon), and they had donned the most extraordinary garments it is possible to conceive. There was no idea of character, they just had hung themselves with curious rags and remnants, and most of them had their hair down. Tea was quite nice, and the cups were numerous. Then a man with long hair came in and sat—on the *floor*. Promptly eight women also sat on the floor, and one twanged a guitar, while the man with the hair (they called him *cher maître*!) closed his eyes, and gently sent wreaths of smoke from between his cupid-bow lips.

The whole thing was pose. There was no *joie de vivre* amongst them. It was all got up for effect. So was the *dénouement*. Madame suddenly scrambled to her feet and declared dramatically, "There is food for us all !"

A screen was pushed on one side, displaying a cold turkey, a ham, and bread. These were placed on the floor—the *penchant* for the floor of the company was extraordinary ! Then we others were all asked to join in the feast.

"No chairs allowed !" cried the hostess gaily. She then held a whispered conversation with the long-haired man, who seemed to consent difficultly to a request, and she announced in awe-struck accents that, after the feast, "the Master would recite." Ten women and seven men groaned with ecstasy, and thanked him with tears in their eyes. I do not know what happened afterwards. "Cher maître" made me feel depressed, so I left for less "Bohemian" circles !

Many an artist has laughed when I have told the history of that afternoon. "Those are the people who ought to be smothered !" said one, and I agreed with him.

They work hard, these students of "the quarter," but when they play they play like children, with their whole hearts.

Many of them attend one or other of the famous schools, and a wonderful sight these schools are

in working hours. At the end of the long, well-lit room is posed the model on a platform, and crowded close together are countless easels with be-bloused, industrious workers, men and women. The master makes his way slowly from easel to easel and says a few words to each budding artist. Sometimes he is pleased, sometimes angry, sometimes contemptuous, but always provided with a wealth of gesticulation.

Many and many a great artist looks back on his student days with a sigh of envy, and well he may. It is not "all cakes and ale," there are many moments of anxiety, and wonder where the next meal is to come from, but anxiety soon passes when one is young, and play hours are so "jolly."

A few of the more ambitious students give a "show day" before they send their pictures to exhibitions, and then there is much cleaning and polishing and excitement. The *femme de ménage* is sent for, and is driven mad by instructions. Old coats are hustled out of sight, the little gallery, or the recess, which contains the toilet arrangements and the bed, groans with the mass of miscellaneous things which have to be hidden from the eyes of the visitor. Then out our student goes, and begs, borrows, or steals cups from all his friends. On these occasions no one ever thinks of seeing that the tea service is not a complete one.

I have a scrawled note still, sent me many years ago by an English artist whose name is now known to just a few art-lovers. It was delivered to me by his concierge's little boy, who "waited to see if there was an answer." It said—

"CHÈRE DAME,—Do, for Heaven's sake, send me five cups, nine spoons, and three plates. And if you have a teapot without a broken spout (you know mine), I will bless you for the loan. That ass, ——— has written to say he's coming to tea with his whole family, and, as you, and the ———, and the ——— are also coming, I'm short. He may buy the Interior, so I can't grumble! Old Madame Rénaud has not turned up, so I'm having a high old time cleaning up, or I'd have come myself."

He told me the other day that he often regretted the teapot with the broken spout!

Of course there are an enormous number of students who are not Art students. The science, law, and medical schools of Paris are celebrated, and the instruction is followed by a crowd of young men of every nation.

These are often renowned for a noisy objection to some professor—then they strike, and there are quite exciting riots. Sometimes the schools have had to be closed—a drastic remedy, which is carried out only when every other method of pacification has failed. For sheer noise commend me to a student row! *How* they yell!

In every big row in Paris, no matter how distant from the quarter, the students—law, art, science, and medical—are in it. They are voracious for rows.

“Here come the students!” you hear, and, singing the *Ça ira* or the *Marseillaise*, holding a banner aloft, and marching down the middle of the road, they come in their hundreds. When they leave off singing they chant their disapprobation in a curious up-and-down, sing-song metre. It goes thus: “À bas les — Hoo hoo. À bas les — Hoo hoo!” On and on, till the “Hoo hoo” enters into the blood of the listener and rouses him to equal wrath. Round and round, and backwards and forwards they go, always singing or booing, and ever ready for a “scrap” with the police. But amongst the latter there is one man who can do more to quiet them than any one else—Monsieur Lépine. Like most Parisians they adore the distinguished Préfet de Police. This slight man with his grey, pointed beard and keen eyes has been known to go alone into the midst of an excited crowd of students howling for the dismissal of some hated professor, and always, when recognised, he has been cheered to the echo.

He probably has more tact than any functionary in Paris, and this accounts for his popularity. One often hears people saying, “What *will* Paris

do when Lépine retires ? ” and one answers, “ What ! ”

There are several student-balls in Paris—Art students, *bien entendu*. The most celebrated of these is the Bal des Quat’z Arts, given every year in some huge arena. Each year the authorities select a certain period of ancient history for the costumes, and they are very particular indeed. The dress has to be exact down to the smallest item, or the wearer is not permitted to enter. I know one man who was turned away because his sandals were not of the period. Another man had to remove and hide his eyeglass before he entered. Also very great care is shown that no outsiders should penetrate the mystic portals : nevertheless it can be done. I know several people who have been, but they have to be well posted in their answers to the doorkeepers—they must say the school they belong to, and be prepared to answer any other questions.

Of course it is a most marvellous sight, this ball, a kaleidoscope of moving colour.

The models are there in force, many of them *not in costume*. There is a procession during the evening with banners, some of these grossly indecent, but designed by some famous artist. The cards are also works of art in their way—a way which would make the uninitiated Anglo-Saxon open his eyes in surprise. Alas ! so would some

of the "goings on" at the ball! Art students at play are not renowned for what we are used to considering refinement. The models of course take an important place in these orgies, and, as the night wears away, an outsider suddenly thrust into the ballroom would rub his eyes, and think his body had been, in some mysterious way, transported back to the ancient Roman or Greek days.

The revels do not break up till morning, and in the light of day the ancient Greeks or Romans wend their way back on foot or in cabs to Montmartre or the Latin quarter.

A few years ago I was living in an *appartement* on the line of route from the Hippodrome—a huge theatre which had been utilised for the ball for the first time. At daylight I was awakened by the noise, and, donning a dressing-gown, I went on to the balcony. What a sight! I shall never forget it. A perfect riot of colour, a feast for the eyes. The period that year was the Roman Republic, and one had to look at the modern houses to realise that things were not what they seemed. Every colour of the rainbow was represented in the gorgeous togas. Heads were bound with fine golden fillets, feet were in sandals. I saw one superbly made young man clothed in a leopard skin, and he looked magnificent. A few were in cabs, five and six of them in each vehicle, but most were on foot. One cab that passed had two Romans on the box seat,

supporting between them a model, standing "naked but unashamed," with the reins in her beautiful hands. Four other men were in the body of the vehicle.

The hours of dancing and heat had not exhausted these young men, not a bit of it! They were full of life. They went down the street laughing and singing, running and jumping, and, as they went, they upset *every single dustbin* which the concierges had placed on the pavements ready for the morning dust-carts! What a mess! Later on I could hear the dustmen grumbling and swearing as they, with difficulty, collected the widely-scattered débris.

Children, mere children, every one of them—if they had overlooked one bin they would run back to it; not one escaped.

It must be a wonderful sight, this ball. I confess I should like to be hidden in a box, and be a peeping Tom, and be shocked all by myself, with no one to notice my blushes!

Speaking of balls reminds me of a very naughty prank played by the Montmartre students.

I have said already that in the Quartier Latin some Americans have installed themselves who have no business there. Well, it came to the ears of Montmartre students that a subscription dance was to be given in "the quarter" by some Americans for students, at which *chaperons* were to be

en evidence. Imagine chaperons at a student dance ! Their gorge rose. Never, never was such a thing to be permitted. They bought tickets, and on the night they went, taking with them some models modestly clothed—in cloaks.

Well in the room, they looked at the row of proper chaperons, gave the word, and—off went the models' cloaks.

Needless to say, the chaperons collected their brood and left !

Nothing irritates a student more than interference with his old customs.

He is mischievous as a child, and is always ready for a “ lark.”

To “ chair ” a model into the street, and then abandon her, to be clothed by some shocked and compassionate policeman !—that seemed to them a most amusing performance.

But how deliciously sentimental and kind-hearted they are too. Their kind acts are numberless. Let me recount one.

A baby was abandoned one day in *le quartier*. She was about to be taken to the home for lost children when the students stepped in and protested. They adopted her, sent her to school, paid for her training as a worker, and, the other day, when she married, they gave her a *dot*, and attended the wedding *en masse*. “ The students' baby ” has had a very happy life, and she must

thank her patron saint that she was abandoned in the quarter.

When the old horse bus from the Panthéon to Courcelles, which many generations of students had used, gave place the other day to one of the new auto-buses, its last journey was the excuse for a characteristic student demonstration, wreaths and banners, and a funeral oration !

Then, if you want to see the student grave and earnest, watch him at the annual pilgrimage to the Strasbourg statue in the Place de la Concorde. There is no skylarking on this day ; *la Patrie* is his only thought.

Is there any one so natural in the world as the student ? Gay, mischievous, sober, kind-hearted, quick-tempered, industrious, and improper.

Vive les étudiants !



STUDENTS AT PLAY.

CHAPTER XI

THE *DEMI-MONDE*

I AM perfectly aware that I am treading on delicate ground when I write the heading of this chapter. I know that in England all "nice" people ignore the fact that in the London streets women by the hundred follow the most ancient, and the most pitiful, profession. Yet this same objection to acknowledge a fact makes London more horrible than Paris, which is supposed to be a "sink of iniquity."

I shall offend many blindly virtuous people, I fear, but it is impossible to write of Paris without mentioning the *demi-monde*; it is impossible to write of the *demi-monde* and not realise that the system of registration and licensing makes the streets possible for decent people to walk in, without fear of the unpleasant sights which one may see every night in Regent Street, Piccadilly, and the neighbourhood.

When I was a very young girl my eyes were opened to this terrible trade one night, when, for

some reason or other, I and my party had to walk from the Haymarket theatre for some distance. I think there was a cab strike—anyway, well-dressed men and women were streaming along the pavements, and deplorably be-rouged faces were peering about for unattached men, and shrill voices were addressing them in wheedling tones. Alas, alas! I know my heart turned faint and sick. I had a vague notion that

“Some things which are not yet enroll’d
In market-lists are bought and sold,”

but until that night I did not know that the piteous thing was a waking reality of every day.

I cannot, *cannot* see the virtue in exposing sores. If the sores have to exist (and the millennium has not yet come), let them at least be hidden.

Knowledge of man’s lust comes soon enough. Let us at least keep our young girls and boys from sights that shock the first innocent ideas of love and beauty.

Paris, for all its “terrible immorality,” is at least more decent in this one respect than smug London with its blatant ignoring of facts which “jump to the eye.”

No open solicitation in the streets is allowed—I believe there is supposed to be a law to this effect in London, but in Paris the law is *operative*. This class of women is licensed, and a policeman can demand their papers at any time. Certain halls

are acknowledged promenades for women, and one need not go to these places unless one wishes.

In public the better-class *demi-mondaine* usually behaves herself with a decorum equal to that of her more virtuous sisters, and there are castes just as in any other grade of Society. A lady at the head of her profession is a very haughty person indeed.

In Paris the real *demi-monde* is not a despised race. Sapho is not spoken of with bated breath, but is discussed in Society—her dresses, her pearls, her last *amant*, all come in for a share of the talk.

“Have you seen So-and-so to-day?” asks one Society dame at the races. “No. Is she wearing her pearls?” says another.

Men are not in the least ashamed of being seen talking to her, and they are not by any means always her lovers, past, present, or future. Some of these women are very bright and witty, and their *appartements* are often crowded with people come to pay a little visit.

It is seldom that they end “in the gutter,” as, in more virtuous Britain, they frequently do. On the contrary, they make hay while the sun shines, and they save money. There are very, very many respectable dull householders in the country who once lived a gay and anything but respectable life in Paris.

Not infrequently they make a good marriage.

Some impoverished nobleman—French or foreign—is tempted by Madame's nest-egg, and an alliance is arranged. It is strange, but these marriages seem to turn out very well.

One famous lady, whose name was known in the four corners of the earth, married a foreign prince, another a well-known Frenchman.

It must be remembered that in Paris it is not considered a disgrace to have a mistress, and these women have their *appartement* where they are visited by their *ami*, and these look down on *les autres* who are not so particular, and they would not think of knowing them. I heard a very enlightening scrap of conversation once at the races between two exquisitely-dressed women. One drew the attention of the other to a girl seated on a chair. "That's Madame A, you know. The Duc de X has just set her up. Do you know her?"

"*Know* her?" cried the other. "*Ma chère!* Only a year ago she used to go every night to B's!"—mentioning a famous (or infamous) bar.

I am using the French words *demi-mondaine* in this chapter, as I am dealing with that class—a class that is utterly unknown in England. It is not within the scope of a book of this kind to enter into particulars of the lower and more blatant forms of vice—they exist in all countries. The *demi-mondaine* is essentially a Parisian product, and as such I have dealt with her.

As far as one can tell, these women take their standing by the rank or wealth of their *amants*.

A Parisian is very kind to his mistress, and showers gifts upon her—sometimes, alas! beyond his means. In nearly all the great money scandals, where men have robbed the State or their employer, it is a case of *cherchez la femme*, and, for this reason, the judge and jury are often very lenient. I suppose “a fellow-feeling makes one wondrous kind.”

Many an actress and *demi-mondaine* (alas! in Paris the terms are often synonymous) have jewels that are worth fortunes, and their estimated value is discussed with deep interest in all classes of Society. They dress beautifully, these women, and are very often robed by the great houses, the advertisement being considered worth the outlay.

One great actress told a reporter that it was possible, *with care*, to dress on £2000 a year! It is commonly reputed that she herself spends not less than £5000. I saw her some years ago at the races in a sealskin coat and skirt, and her real lace and fur hat sported an emerald aigrette.

There is one vulgarity that the *demi-mondaine* apparently cannot resist—she never holds up her dress. Presumably this is to show that money is nothing to her. It does go to one's heart to see priceless laces and chiffons and costly furs dragged

through dust and mud, and it certainly does not look cleanly. If they could be cured of this piece of bad taste there would be little to distinguish them from the *femme du monde*, barring their too great perfection in dress, and their lonely self-possession.

As a rule they are not vulgar or loud, they do not "make eyes," nor do they conspicuously thrust themselves into notice.

All this refers naturally to the "respectable" *demi-mondaines*—if the word does not seem an anachronism to Anglo-Saxon ears. There are others who are neither so quiet, so well dressed, nor so haughty. The ambition of these is to mount to the upper rungs of the ladder, to have one "friend," and he a rich one.

The great reason why these women seldom sink to a miserable end is that, as a rule, they do not drink. I cannot repeat too often that the French is an extraordinarily sober race.

Some of them take drugs. In the *maison de santé* I shall mention in my chapter on "nerves" from time to time appeared some of these ladies, with (usually) a sincere desire to be cured.

They were kind-hearted creatures as a rule, with a longing to confide in any one who would listen. It is from the English superintendent of this house that I have culled most of my information as to their strange outlook on life.

My friend told me that they did not seem to be the "bold, bad females" one would imagine. They are curiously simple, ignorant, generous, and very easily amused. One confided her whole history to this lady, and, though to our minds sufficiently sad, there was no harrowing tale of seduction and desertion.

I am told that a very great many *demi-mondaines* begin their career as work-girls, as the low wages are practically impossible to live on. A lover appears and tempts them to greater ease—and so it goes on.

To the Anglo-Saxon who thinks that this very fact of acknowledgment of the existing state of things is abominable, it must not be forgotten that it was but the Reformation which changed England—and not altogether even then.

Our kings down to the beginning of the nineteenth century had their mistresses, and our famous men. We speak with a certain pride of Lady Hamilton. We shake our heads leniently over Byron, Robbie Burns, and many others—have a few short decades made such a difference that we should look down our noses and shake our heads at a Frenchman because he has his mistress, and does not hide the fact in a shame-faced manner?

The truth is this—that a Frenchman considers it is more respectable to have *one mistress*. An

Englishman has other views, which a Frenchman describes as *dégoutant*.

Entente cordiale notwithstanding, the two races apparently cannot understand each other's ideas on this subject.

To show that a Frenchman considers that there is nothing disgraceful in his *liaison*, it is a well-known fact that many have legitimatised a child borne to them by their mistress. This can be done legally in France, and is constantly taken advantage of. Sometimes the *ménage* goes on for years, and is a recognised thing. One case I know of has lasted for sixteen years.

In a book of this kind it is impossible to enter into the question of registration and regularisation of vice. A wise legislation has decided that it is necessary, and tends to law and order—*autres pays, autres mœurs*. In England the mere suggestion of such a thing is enough to create a storm of indignation.

Yet remember that a Frenchman is much more astounded at our little peculiarities than any Englishman can be of the French. A Parisienne once remarked to me, "You turn respectable people out of your restaurants at half-past twelve when they are eating their suppers, and you allow your streets to be unfit for a girl to see!" and she ended with a shrug of complete bewilderment.

CHAPTER XII

FAMILY FUNCTIONS

“On entre, on crie,
C'est la Vie!
On crie, on sort,
C'est la Mort.”

BUT, alas! it is not as simple as that in these days, when all sorts of ceremonies follow birth and death. The French, perhaps more than other nationalities, are very fond of ceremonial functions, and every family event has its more or less elaborate ritual—Baptism, First Communion, betrothal, marriage, and death. From the time the baby enters into the world to the time the old man goes out of it he can take no important step without a family function.

Madame So-and-so has had a baby—baby is christened by the priest at once, in case of accidents. (Poor, innocent soul, they think it would be damned by a just God if it went out of the world unmarked by the emblem of the Christian faith.) But that is not the baptism—oh no. For that is a “function,” and invitations have to be sent out as

for a reception or dance. When the day arrives baby is taken to the church, and Madame's friends have to be there in force to admire and wonder. In the humble classes this is the only ceremony that is more or less private; the poor do not make a show of their baby's reception into the church.

A few years pass, usually ten or twelve, then the child—little more than a baby still—takes its sins on its own shoulders in the ceremony of *Première Communion*, equivalent to our Confirmation. I may be very old-fashioned, but to me it seems somewhat inappropriate to turn a solemn religious rite into an exciting party, for the child to think of nothing but its clothes and the presents it will receive. Yes, presents! For every friend of Monsieur and Madame gives the little communicant a gift of some kind, often jewellery. A strange custom! The children are puffed up with self-importance; they keep their dress on all day, and in the month of May one sees every day white-robed girls and self-conscious boys being marched about proudly by their parents. The girls—tiny tots, some of them—wear long white dresses, and over their heads and down to their feet are white veils. If it were not that one cannot help thinking of the solemn occasion, it would be very funny sometimes to see these babies struggling to hold up the unaccustomed

voluminous draperies. Boys wear black suits, and a badge round the arm of white ribbon, with streamers.

In every class this *Première Communion* is a function.

I trust that Confirmation in England will never become an important show.

Next comes the betrothal. Some people make a very big affair of this, and invitations are sent out to all friends and relations for a dance, dinner, garden-party, and so on. Others make it merely a family function, and give a lunch or dinner. Of course, the dot of the girl and the income of the man form the greater part of the conversation. As the matter is a business one no sentiment is expected, though papa will usually make a speech, with all the correct platitudes about happiness, and so on.

A wedding is the most important event in Parisian life; in every class it is a tremendous business. It is very, very rare for a Parisienne to be married in her travelling dress; no matter how poor she is, she must have the regulation white, and orange-blossoms. In the *haut monde* weddings differ little from those of the same class in England or America; it is when we descend the scale to the lower strata that we get some peculiar differences.

Take a servant, for instance. It is astounding

the amount of money she will spend on her wedding. In England the poor spend money on showy funerals; it is their one pride. "I'll 'ave a 'earse with feathers if I 'ave to go short for months," I heard a woman say once. In Paris it is the wedding that makes them "go short for months." I knew of one shop employée who spent £30 on the ceremony!

First and foremost there must be many carriages, the more the better. These carriages are never seen at any other time; they appear for weddings alone. Huge landaus with glass sides, or, in summer, open.

After the ceremony at the *mairie* and the church (civil and religious; the first is compulsory) the company gets into the carriages, and the procession starts for a restaurant in the environs of Paris—St. Cloud is a very favourite place. In the first carriage is the bride and groom, and *also* the best man and a bride's-maid. This want of privacy makes no difference to the chief parties concerned; it is *de rigueur* for the man to have his arm round his wife's waist! In the other carriages, which follow in a long stream, are the relations and friends, the women beautifully dressed, the men in evening clothes.

A very few years ago evening clothes were worn at weddings and funerals by the very highest in the land; of late years the better classes have

adopted the English habit, and left evening dress to *ces autres*. But even now, in a funeral of a public character, the men still wear the *habit de cérémonie*.

To continue. Arrived at the restaurant, the company sits down to an elaborate meal, which lasts for a long time. This finished, the somewhat heated guests stream into a room hired for dancing, and there the fun is fast and furious. Every one dances, even mamma, who is so fat she can hardly move.

If the money is sufficient, there is another meal—dinner—and after that more dancing. But usually about half-past six the festivities end, the carriages are reloaded, and, in the same order, they return to Paris. Sometimes a few turns in the Bois are taken *en route*, and if it is a crowded day *tant mieux*—the more people to notice their grandeur the better.

There is great jealousy shown about rival ceremonies. I saw once two wedding parties arrive at a favourite restaurant. The first had five carriages, the second seven. It was a study to watch the faces of the two groups—would-be indifference and suppressed fury in the first, open triumph in the second. Then the first bride suddenly realised that her dress was of satin, the other's but of silk, and she spread out her train and preened herself, while she looked with pity on her rival!

Some things are absolutely necessary to the

mind of the bride of the lower classes—she *must* have a white dress, a veil, and orange-blossom. She *must* have as many carriages as possible. And her guests *must* do her justice. If the men have no evening clothes they can hire them—and they usually do, which accounts for their sometimes comical appearance.

It is extraordinary the pride the very poorest girl will take in her wedding. I went to a friend's house one day and found her surrounded by a huge collection of her husband's and her own old white gloves. On inquiry I found that she was trying to find some large-sized ones to give to a girl who sold vegetables off a barrow. The girl was going to be married. She had managed everything else, but "kid gloves were so expensive." She was wearing white muslin, made by herself, a veil, and orange-blossoms. Her fiancé was a road-cleaner, and between them they earned about thirty francs per week. They would both have to continue their employment, and work hard, but—"one must have a decent wedding."

It is really rather pathetic, for often the money spent on these functions would save the young couple from care, but they never think of that. It seems to me that this is the only trace of snobbery one can discover in the French character.

In every nation death ought to be devoid of rushing ceremony, yet in every nation, except

perhaps the Eastern, it is made the excuse for an undignified paraphernalia of woe.

The moment any one dies in a French household some one has to rush round to the printers, and see to the *faire parts*. This is a horrible double sheet of glazed paper, with an inch-wide band of black *all* round it, back and front, and it has to be sent out to every single person known to the family. The announcement is as follows:—

There is a cross and an M. at the top, then—

“YOU ARE ASKED TO ASSIST AT THE PROCESSION,
SERVICE, AND INTERMENT OF

MADAME MARIE LOUISE A.

WIDOW OF MONSIEUR JEAN A.

*(Here follows the profession and decorations of the late
M. Jean A.)*

DIED THE 2ND JANUARY 1912, BLESSED BY THE SACRAMENT OF THE CHURCH, AT HER RESIDENCE — — —, AT THE AGE OF 70 YEARS; WHICH WILL TAKE PLACE ON THURSDAY THE 4TH INST., AT TEN O’CLOCK PUNCTUALLY, IN THE CHURCH NOTRE DAME DES CHAMPS, HER PARISH.

PRAY FOR HER!

THE COMPANY WILL MEET AT THE HOUSE OF MOURNING.

FROM MONSIEUR GUSTAVE A., FROM MONSIEUR AND MADAME PAUL B., HER SON, DAUGHTER, AND SON-IN-LAW. FROM MADAME GEORGES C., HER SISTER. FROM MONSIEUR AND MADAME JACQUES A., HER BROTHER- AND SISTER-IN-LAW. FROM MONSIEUR AND MADAME D. AND THEIR CHILDREN. FROM MADAME PIERRE E. AND HER DAUGHTERS. FROM MADEMOISELLE GERMAINE F. FROM MONSIEUR EUGÈNE G. AND HIS CHILDREN. FROM MONSIEUR RENÉ H. FROM MADAME I. FROM MADEMOISELLE THÉRÈSE J. HER GRANDCHILDREN, GREAT-GRANDCHILDREN, NEPHEWS, NIECES, GREAT-NEPHEWS, AND GREAT-NIECES.

THE INTERMENT WILL BE AT THE MONTPARNASSE CEMETERY.”

These are all posted the same day as the death. In France the funeral has to take place within forty-eight hours, unless the defunct is an important person, and then a public funeral could not be arranged so quickly; or unless for some reason or another permission has been granted for a delay.

On the morning of the funeral, the coffin is brought down, if an authorisation has been given, to the entrance to the house, and placed on trestles in the full view of the passer-by. All who enter the door sprinkle the *cercueil* with Holy Water, and religious persons passing can do the same. The flowers, and horrible tin and bead wreaths, so beloved by the French *bourgeois*, are placed on and round the pall.

It is a gruesome and somewhat startling surprise to enter a *porte-cochère* to pay a call in the house and be confronted by this gloomy sight. I was leaving my own house once when I was brought up on the threshold by this sudden surprise. I had not heard that any one in the house was dead.

Sometimes the family has no permission for this public exhibition of their dead. In that case, though the *porte-cochère* is draped in black, a room in the flat is turned into a mortuary chamber. But in all private houses, where no one has a right to object, the entry is the *mortuaire*.



A PUBLIC FUNERAL. PASSING THE PLACE DE LA CONCORDE.

The panoply of woe is very much more startling in France than in Anglo-Saxon countries. Whereas in England the hearse is now as simple as possible, and the carriages like private ones (always excepting the poorer-class funerals), in Paris they cling to the black-draped carriages, the dyed horses, and all the rest of it. The drivers wear a curious old-world uniform, black and silver, with a cocked hat.

The entrance to the church is draped in black, or black and silver, when the mourners can afford to pay for this. Though I personally loathe the outward show of mourning, I must say I was shocked and disgusted one day when, at a famous church, I saw the black draperies of a rich funeral being very hurriedly taken down while a second, very poor, funeral was kept waiting to enter. *These* mourners, poor things, had not paid for them. Surely it would have cost nothing to let them have this little consolation !

Behind the hearse walk the chief mourners—in all weathers, sun or rain, hot or cold, through dust or mud. Behind them again come the carriages.

There is a very strict convention as to mourning clothes in Paris. All women wear what we consider widow's dress, with the long crêpe veil and "weepers." This is worn for mother, sister, brother, father, and even much more distant

relations. Widows wear a tiny white band under the bonnet, and a shawl instead of cloak or jacket. This is the sole difference, and the only way one can distinguish them.

Mourning is still worn for years by all but the *mondaines*, and only quite lately have even they begun to adopt the more lenient customs of England. I knew one woman of Society who told me a few years ago that she had not worn a colour for nine years. Nine years before her husband had died, three years after that (she was still in deep mourning, of course) her father, two years later an aunt, then a brother-in-law, and a cousin at intervals. When I met her she was beginning to introduce white and grey in her trappings of woe. As for *crêpe*, you are thought very eccentric indeed if you do not wear it. I fear I was rude to a woman once who remarked to me (quite kindly), when I was in simple mourning for a very near and dear relation, "I think you ought to wear *crêpe*, *chère Madame*. It is as well to *pretend* to care, even if one does not."

An English friend once said to me in a train, "What a young widow!" gazing pityingly at a girl in "weeds" opposite. I answered, "Don't upset your tender heart, she's probably lost her uncle's stepson!"

Men put mourning bands even on their *pot-hats*, and their top-hats are all band and no silk, except

on top! Some wear crush opera-hats, as they look more funereal.

As I have said, in the upper classes, this mourning convention is gradually becoming less severe. One woman I know is already in black and white, though she lost her aunt but four months ago. Another, a widow for two years, is also slowly melting out of mourning. But amongst the *petits bourgeois* the hide-bound regulations still exist, and it is very hard on those who have not too much money, as crêpe wears very badly.

I think more guests attend funerals in Paris than elsewhere. However humble the *cortège*, one usually sees a good many followers. Some go to the church only, and others go on to the cemetery.

I saw a curious, and very sad thing once. I was passing a church just as the coffin had been carried in, and the guests preparing to follow. The women went in, and some of the men drew back and consulted together. Then they decided not to enter, and went to a café to wait for the other mourners to appear. This struck me as a very characteristic sign of the irreligion of the times. Another sign of the same trend of mind is the fact that *Priez pour elle* is nowadays often omitted from the *faire parts*.

Is it not curious, under the circumstances, that Parisians should make a festival for their

child's *Première Communion*? I shall remark elsewhere on the religious fête days. But I suppose no one on this earth, and certainly no nation, is strictly consistent.

I am thankful to say that this indifference to religion has made no difference to the respect shown to the dead by the passer-by. Every man lifts his hat, even the cabman and the chauffeur. But I presume this is not a question of religion, but sympathy.

One thing more—I have mentioned above the horrible tin and bead wreaths seen at funerals. There are an enormous number of shops in Paris which sell these atrocities, and they are great favourites. Though real flowers are becoming more and more numerous, even at the funerals of the *haut monde* one can still see several unbreakable offerings. A few years ago they were in the majority at all funerals, of whatever class. I suppose the economical French mind grasped the fact that they last longer. It is a distressing sight, when one visits a cemetery, to see the old, rusty, discoloured tins lying on the graves. At least the flowers have long since gone back to the earth which gave them birth, but the artificial gifts remain there neglected, as an expression of man's want of taste in the beginning, and forgetfulness in the end.

CHAPTER XIII

THEATRES AND MUSIC HALLS

THE Parisian is a great theatre-goer. He goes to the play far oftener than the Londoner.

Even if the seats in Paris theatres were as expensive as in London, I think he would still not be able to deny himself. But where a stall seat can be bought for seven to ten francs, and balcony seats for five to seven francs, the extravagance is not great—even if the Parisian always paid these prices, which he does not. There is a curious method by which tickets can be bought for a little more than half-price. One subscribes two francs per year to an organisation which buys up tickets in some mysterious way—I cannot explain the mystery, I know only the results. This subscription entitles one to a certain number of tickets per fortnight. One receives an envelope containing slips for five or six theatres, dated for certain days; each slip is for four seats, but one or two only need be used. The theatre chosen, the slip is taken to the box office, and the price paid which is marked on it—

stalls so much, balcony so much. There are a few theatres which are not included in this *abonnement*, such as the Opéra, the Français (State theatres), etc., but nearly all are available.

How it can pay the theatres is a puzzle to every one, but apparently it does, or it would not continue.

A Parisian rarely pays the full price for his seat; if he has not these half-price tickets he has free seats. The amount of "paper" in the Paris theatres is astonishing, every one seems to get free tickets some time or another.

Then a great economy for Parisian play-goers is that, unlike London, the theatres are nearly all situated in get-atable places. It must be remembered that *all* Paris is residential, there is no street without flats. So all that Monsieur and Madame have to do is to choose a theatre near their residence, and walk to it. Or, if a little farther away, they go by omnibus or underground—a cab is rarely taken.

All these reasons combine to make the Paris theatres, with one or two exceptions, very dowdy. Monsieur and Madame Grocer cannot be expected to come in resplendent evening-dress.

In all theatres now hats are not worn in the stalls or dress circle, but only a few years ago every one wore them, and exceedingly unpleasant it was. If Englishwomen, ignorant of this, went

hatless, they were stared at. There was great obstinacy shown before hats finally disappeared, and there were many rows. I was in a theatre one night where there was practically a riot because some women refused to remove their immense headgear. The commencement of the play was delayed for three-quarters of an hour, while the whole house screamed "*Les chapeaux, les chapeaux*" to the favourite "Kentish-fire" rhythm.

There are a few theatres which are dressy—that is to say where evening-dress is practically *de rigueur*. Amongst these are the Opéra and the Français. One very small and very chic theatre, which has no cheap seats, is always exceedingly smart, there nearly every woman is *décolletée*; but in most houses it is the exception to see real evening-dress; the "theatre dress" is a speciality in Paris—a cross between a summer and an evening frock. It is by no means the rule for men to wear evening-dress, though much more usual than it was a few years ago, and it is no uncommon thing to see tweeds in the stalls. In this respect the theatres have much improved, some years ago they were dowdy in the extreme.

Even now, in the boxes, women usually wear hats. There is no doubt about it that a Parisienne looks much nicer in her hat, and she knows it, and is loath to discard it. So loath was she that, when the big hat was banned, she invented head-

gear expressly for the theatre, and only lately have the turbans and mob caps become *démodé*.

A very amusing habit, one that is very slowly dying out, is for men to immediately replace their hats on their heads when the curtain falls at the end of an act, only removing them when the play recommences. What was the origin of this I have never been able to discover. *Ça m'intrigue beaucoup*.

As a rule the play-goer is very well behaved in Paris. Noisy disapproval of a play is rare. In my chapter on "Rows and Riots" I shall tell of the unfortunate incidents when "*Après Moi*" was produced at the Français, and there have been a few cases where the audience has objected to either play or actor. One of the most noted of these was when a small theatre, a few years ago, produced a piece in which a certain lady (not an actress) was advertised to appear. It is utterly impossible to hint here at the scandal associated with this, but anyway Paris turned moral, and the scene in that theatre was astounding. The audience waited till the lady appeared, then pandemonium reigned. The air was thick with flying missiles, and the shouting and whistling were enough to split one's ear-drums. Needless to say the curtain had to descend, and Madame X had to retire into private life again.

Sometimes a few words uttered in a play by



THE QUEUE OUTSIDE THE OPÉRA ON A FREE-REPRESENTATION NIGHT.

one of the actors will send the audience into a towering passion.

A Parisian audience shows emotion much more easily than an Anglo-Saxon one. The French are not ashamed to cry openly. When the wonderful Sicilian troupe was acting in Paris the whole theatre sobbed aloud. I was not calm enough myself to note details, but I saw a gorgeous *demi-mondaine*, in the box next to me, rest her head on the padded box-front, and howl. Her beautifully-arranged face was an utter ruin afterwards.

A new play is usually received kindly. There is seldom the hissing or whistling one hears at some first nights in an English theatre. The Parisian is essentially a kind-hearted person, and he will very often clap out of sheer *bonhomie* when he thinks the play no good. Of course, one can tell the difference between this and real spontaneous admiration, but he does his best.

The *claque* is an institution much abused by the Anglo-Saxon, but I must acknowledge that it has its advantages. A little clapping, even if he knows that it is professional, will often encourage an actor and enable him to do better than he would if received in cold silence.

What a dreary occupation, by the way, to be a member of the *claque* ! How bored they look, these men, sitting there in rows, with their hardened

hands ready to beat together at the moments ordered by their employer.

Actors and actresses have to tip the head of the *claque* or their business will be "queered."

Speaking of tipping, an actor has a bad time in Paris. I know a lady who made her *début* in opera, and the number of tips she had to give nearly ruined her. Not only to the *personnel* of the theatre, but to many others.

It is a well-known complaint of play-wrights that, unless they can afford to *pay* for their plays to be produced, it is difficult to get a hearing. This is constantly done, and, doubtless, accounts for the number of worthless plays. Even one of the best-known play-wrights, a man whose plays are known throughout the world, told me that he would have to give up writing soon, as it became increasingly difficult for him to get a play accepted unless he paid, and this he would not do.

It is a crying shame, as, when they are good, French plays far surpass in cleverness those of any other nation. The same may be said of the acting. One *never* sees in Paris the amateurish efforts which so constantly spoil an English play. From the leading actors down to the servant, or the unit in a stage crowd, every part is a finished and exquisite piece of dramatic work. Never have I seen in Paris a crowd staring stolidly into the auditorium, emotionless and lethargic, while

a murder or some equally harrowing work was going on in its midst. It is a lesson in what acting ought to be to watch the gestures and facial expressions of the chorus in opera, or the mob in a stirring drama.

Acting is in the French blood, and another thing that helps is the utter lack of self-consciousness. Also they are taught to act, and have to go through very hard work at the *conservatoire*.

Ladies *never* go on the stage in France; it is unheard of. A few gentlemen do, but very few. It is very difficult for a Parisian to realise that in England and America it is not considered a terrible thing for a girl of good birth and education to adopt this profession. In Paris, on many grounds, it would be utterly impossible—my readers who know anything about the Paris stage can easily divine the reasons.

Behind the scenes the management is not nearly so particular as it is in England, and wings and dressing-rooms are usually crowded with "visitors." A Parisian told me that, when a certain musical-comedy company was brought over from England a short time ago, a great deal of disappointment was felt by the *jeunesse dorée* that it was not permitted by the manager to visit *ces charmantes Anglaises* behind the scenes.

Now, as to plays. As I have said above, if clever, they are very, very clever, and they cannot

be compared with those of other nations. That, from the Anglo-Saxon point of view, they are often very outspoken, I will not deny. French art and literature have always been noted for "calling a spade a spade." But in the good dramas and comedies this is not offensive except to the hypercritical. The cleverness and *consistency* counteract any squeamishness one might feel in hearing matters openly discussed that are usually only hinted at on the stage in Britain and America.

The subject of most French plays is the ever-green one of the man and his wife and the *tertium quid*, and the matter is dealt with frankly.

It is utterly impossible adequately to translate this type of play, and Anglo-Saxons who have had the opportunity of judging French plays only from these translations can have not the faintest idea of the originals. An English friend told me that he had seen *La Vierge Folle* in England (I forget its English title), and that he found it very dull. I defy any one to have found the original dull, but I can quite see that an expurgated edition might be so. The play was one of the finest I have ever seen, exquisitely pathetic and dramatic, and the acting was more than perfect. But how it was translated at all I cannot imagine, as the whole action hung on a theme which is not possible for the Anglo-Saxon

ideas of morality. It was a slice of real life, cruel, moving, and bitter.

I have no quarrel with that estimable person, the English censor, but I cannot see, and never shall see, what harm this play could ever do. I should not take a *jeune fille* to see it, certainly, but then I should not care to allow a *jeune fille* to drink *fine champagne*, which is not considered harmful for the woman of the world.

That a great many plays in Paris—usually farces—are very improper, I admit. These are suitable only to the Parisian, and those who have lived so long in Paris that their ideas have become acclimatised. They are sometimes screamingly funny, but their subjects and action are distinctly and wholly French. I can quite see that a piece where a bed is the centre of attraction is out of the question for the English or American stage! One forgives the indecency because of the acting, and though one side of one's brain may be shocked, the other is intensely amused. I realise that this type of play could not be acted by any but French players, with any others the indecency would outweigh the cleverness.

But there is one type of French play that even the acclimatised Anglo-Saxon can never get used to, and this is not indecent, nor immoral, but just objectionable. A play which, as I write,

has been running in Paris for a considerable time has its chief action built round a subject which is not referred to in England even in domestic circles. The topic is *impossible*. But the French in matters of this kind have not yet reached the stage of refinement of our countrymen, and see nothing out of the way in references to things which we keep for the nursery or the doctor's consulting room. Anyway, night after night a large audience laughs itself hoarse over a play that can bring only a grimace of disgust to the faces of the Anglo-Saxons present.

I am glad to say that it is only occasionally this kind of play is seen, though passing references to the same subject are made now and then in farces.

Where the English have gone mad over light musical comedies the Parisian is equally enamoured with *revues* (as a rule these are produced at music halls). These are usually exceedingly witty and amusing for those who are *au courant* with every topic of interest of the moment; others cannot understand them. The author seizes hold of every political event, every scandal, and every incident that has been in the papers, and each is parodied in a very clever way. No one is sacred to the writer of *revues*: from the President and ministers to the *homme du monde*, all are caricatured with no disguise as to their identity.

But, as I say, the allusions and action will be utterly lost on a foreigner who is not cognisant of every smallest happening in the French capital.

They are beautifully staged, these *revues*, and famous stars are engaged to play and sing in them, but, for myself, I think one must be French or a resident of Paris to thoroughly appreciate them.

There is one custom in Paris theatres which I fancy would create a good deal of interest if it became general in England. I refer to the *répétition générale*. This means, strictly translated, general rehearsal, or dress-rehearsal. In Paris this is a theatrical event, in the sense that the audience is present by invitation. All the press is invited, and one great advantage to my mind is that a dramatic critic has time before the next morning but one to write a careful study of the piece, instead of having to rush off and scribble a hurried critique to be in time for the next morning's paper.

The *répétition générale* is the night before the "first night," and it is a very smart and interesting function. One sees many famous people at the "*répé*" of a fashionable theatre, and it resembles some big reception. People gather in the *foyer* in the intervals (nearly always long), between the acts, and nearly everybody knows everybody else. There you can see some

theatrical "star" talking to a well-known politician, while a little group stands near and admires the actress' diamonds. There, again, a celebrated artist is laughing with a writer of repute.

One notices many faces which have been familiar to one in the sheets of the illustrated papers, and opera glasses are turned about busily in the auditorium, and hands are waved from stalls to boxes or from boxes to balcony.

It is an enjoyable function the "*répé*," and he would be a foolish person who refused an invitation to one.

CHAPTER XIV

THEATRES AND MUSIC-HALLS (*continued*)

IN England the majority of the audience remains seated between the acts, in Paris it is the minority which does so. The people stream out the moment the curtain is down, and walk up and down in the *foyer*, or in the corridors.

The *foyer* is an institution, and many of them are beautifully decorated with paintings and statues. That of the Palais Royal is celebrated for its painted frieze, which illustrates the history of the theatre from the time when Mademoiselle de Montansier bought the little *théâtre des marionnettes*—called then the Beaujolais—to the Empire days. All the old famous actors and actresses look down every night with their pictured faces on the modern crowd strolling beneath them. A queer little gallery runs down one side of this *foyer*, whence the play-goer can also look down on the people beneath. This old theatre is well worth seeing. On the stalls level it is surrounded with small boxes with grills in front of them, which can be moved up or down at will. These

boxes are called *baignoires* (bathing-machines), and, if Madame, in the absence of her husband, wishes to visit the theatre with Monsieur X, her privacy is insured.

One can find these *baignoires* in a few other old-fashioned theatres, and very curious they look to Anglo-Saxon eyes, which are used to the modern up-to-date theatre, with every appliance for comfort.

There are few modern theatres in Paris, the Parisian play-goer is quite content with the old theatre that has not been changed for many, many years. He does not grumble at the worn stone stairs, nor the winding, low-ceiled corridors, nor at the *strapontins*—the odd seats which are fixed to the ends of the stall-seats and along the walls beneath the boxes, and which make moving about almost an impossibility. He is content to sit in the front row of the stalls and see the upper half of the actors—as the stage is so high, and the stalls so close to it, it is not possible to see more. There are no orchestras in Paris theatres except where a musical piece or *revue* is being produced. The prompter's box is a hooded arrangement in the middle front of the stage, and is about two feet high, the prompter being beneath the stage, with his head visible to the actors.

The signal for the curtain to rise is three loud

bangs on the floor behind the scenes, and this amuses many of the foreign audience.

As in England, different theatres have different specialities as to the *genre* of the plays produced. The Porte St. Martin and Ambigu, melodrama or strong drama. Palais Royal and Variétés, *risqué* farces. Odéon, classic dramas. Vaudeville, Athénée, Gymnase, Réjane, and Renaissance, modern comedies. The Comédie Royal and Théâtre Michel produce several little plays, usually very French farces. The Grand Guignol is unique in that its entertainment consists of five or six short plays, of which two are "horrors," the rest comedy and farce. This theatre is a great favourite with both French and foreigners, and one can be sure of spending an exciting evening in this queer little house, which was once a chapel.

The Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt is a fine modern theatre, and, when "the divine Sarah" is acting, is usually crowded with an audience ready to applaud this wonderful woman with her golden voice, whom age never seems to touch with sacrilegious hand.

The Comédie Française has a distinct position. It has a large subvention from the Government, and, for acting, is considered the first theatre in the world. Originally it produced only plays by classical authors, hence its name of the House of Molière, but of late years a few modern plays

have been given, though many have been refused by the conservative management, which afterwards have had immense success elsewhere. Of late years, too, many of the actors and actresses have left the sacred portals for a wider field; the last to go is Le Bargy, whom one associated with the Française as one associates the Champs Élysées with Paris. In the old days an actor who was engaged by this theatre considered that he had nothing left to wish for, and though this no longer makes him mad with joy, it is no doubt a very great honour. The acting is very fine, and all the old traditions are upheld.

Antoine's theatre also is unique, inasmuch as Antoine himself made his name by hard work, and a breaking away from tradition. He was an employé of a gas company, when, in 1887, he decided that a totally different kind of theatre was needed. It would be out of place here to give the history of this remarkable man, and how, from a performance given in a cheap hall in Montmartre, he, in the end, achieved what he did.

I have not mentioned all the Paris theatres by any means, their name is legion. It would also be invidious to name but a few of the actors and actresses where all are good. Whereas, in England, in a play one may see, perhaps, two, three, or four of the principal characters really well acted, in Paris the whole company is excellent. Naturally

some are better than others, and the public has its favourites, but I have often seen a subsidiary part so exquisitely acted that I have felt quite grieved when the action of the piece has necessitated its disappearance.

The French do not consider that the Anglo-Saxon can act. They will make a few exceptions—very few—but their opinion of us in this art is not a high one, and I fear it is justified. I am happy to say that it is possible to see in London a play which is thoroughly well acted by every one, but it is a chance. In Paris you *know* that, however bad the play will be, it will be perfect as far as the artistes are concerned.

Music halls differ a good deal from the English ones. There are very few houses which give “turns” as in England. There is nearly always a ballet or *revue*, with a few “turns” to commence with. There is one hall under English management, the Alhambra, and, judging by the way the French audience appreciates the excellent programmes, I wonder why more do not start on the same plan. As a rule, the music hall stars appear in the course of the *revue*, and not as a separate “turn.”

Every Englishman or American who comes to Paris visits the Folies Bergères with its gaily decorated auditorium, and huge *promenoir* crowded with beautifully dressed “ladies.” The Moulin

Rouge and Olympia also attract the foreigner in hundreds. There are many others less well known to the visitors, though crowded always with natives. In summer the open-air *cafés chantants* are great favourites. The Ambassadeurs, Alcazar, Jardin de Paris, and Marigny are the best known of these. It is very pleasant on a hot night to sit in one of these resorts sipping an iced drink and watching the stage with its gaily-dressed company of ballet-girls. In some of these places you do not buy your seat, but pay (highly) for your drink, and you can sit at your little table for the rest of the evening. One or two have restaurants attached, and, if a table can be secured in the front row of the balcony, the experience is pleasanter still.

If an Englishman wants to see fun fast and furious he had better visit the Jardin de Paris on the night of the Grand Prix, but let him wear a crush-hat. For some reason or other tradition says that hats must be smashed on this night, and an Anglo-Saxon who innocently wanders in is apt to be very much astonished, and his temper ruffled.

Except in the music halls that are little visited by foreigners the performance is seldom "shocking." At the Moulin Rouge *revue* one sometimes sees a dancer a little more *décolletée* than is usual, and some of the songs are *risqué*, but as a rule the English visitor will not be unduly horrified in

those halls he is likely to patronise. Of course, in some halls, in the intervals, there is the usual *lingerie* display amongst the "quadrille" dancers, but this need not be looked at unless desired. Nor need the side-shows, with their *soi-disant* oriental dances, be entered.

The music halls in point of comfort are much more up-to-date than the theatres. The seats are comfortable and not unduly close, the decorations are light and pretty, and there is room to move about. The boxes are usually open ones, like stables, and prices run higher than in theatres.

One or two grumbles before I have done with the subject of theatres: One is the notorious unpunctuality. It is rare to find a play begin at the hour advertised, so rare that, I think, I can count the exceptions I have known on one hand. As I shall detail more fully later, the French, as a race, are abominably unpunctual, and I presume theatre managers think that by beginning later than announced the audience will have assembled. Not a bit of it! The public knows that a play advertised to begin at eight-thirty will begin at nine, or later, and never by any chance are the seats filled before that later hour, and very often not then. Late-comers irritate one enough in proverbially punctual countries, but in Paris it is really unspeakable. One would think that even primeval notions of politeness would make an *invited*

audience punctual, yet at the *répétitions* the late-comers are more numerous than ever. Surely it would be but decent to reward the management for its courtesy in sending you an invitation by being in your place in time, and not disturbing both the audience and actors by a noisy late entry. Especially at the opera is it annoying. One may be listening enthralled to the overture when in comes a long train of people for whom you have to rise to enable them to pass, and they chatter, chatter, chatter, till one feels that soon one will develop the prevailing "nerves." The French are not musical. They *cannot* be, or they would not whisper and laugh through the finest operas in the world. Surely it is unnecessary to buy seats at the opera to enable you to retail all the family gossip! Yet this is what many people seem to do as a practice, to the enormous discomfort of the music-lover.

Another growl, a growl which will be shared by every foreigner and many Parisians, is against the hateful harpies which show one to one's seat and demand *un petit pourboire* before one has time to find one's purse or settle down. It is not the fault of these women, who pay the management for their posts, but the fault of the iniquitous system running through everything in Paris, a system which presents the pistol of custom at the head, and says, "Your money or your—discomfort."

Nothing is free in a Paris theatre. Programmes, cloakroom, guidance, all have to be paid for. I think there have been but two theatres where all used to be free, and those theatres were leased by famous women actresses who were doubtless struck by the better methods in vogue in England and America.

The cloakrooms (save the mark !) are in the passages, often very narrow in any case, and I constantly figure to myself the horrible results in case of fire. I know but one theatre, a new one, that has adequate emergency exits. Most have narrow, twisting corridors and steep stairs, and it makes one shudder to think of that mass of coats and cloaks, torn from their pegs, and twisted tragically round the feet of the flying, panic-stricken crowd.

Nothing will be done—nothing ever is done till there is some horrible disaster which makes the whole world shudder. But when I picture the horrors of that mad flight, I more than ever am firm in my determination to remain in my seat if I am ever unfortunate enough to be in a theatre fire, which God forbid—the sight in Paris would be enough to darken one's whole future life.

CHAPTER XV

THE RACES

THE race-goer in Paris has one great advantage over the Londoner. No less than seven racecourses are within easy driving distance of the city. These are: Longchamp, Auteuil, St. Cloud, St. Ouen, Le Tremblay, Maisons Lafitte, and Enghien. The first two are in the Bois de Boulogne, St. Cloud is just a little farther, St. Ouen, Le Tremblay, and Enghien are all three on the borders of the city, and Maisons Lafitte a few miles out. A short train journey carries one to Chantilly.

All the important races are run at one or other of these racecourses. The Grand Prix and the Prix du Conseil Municipal at Longchamp; the Grand Steeple and Grand Hurdle at Auteuil; the Prix du President de la Republic at Maisons Lafitte; the Prix de Diane (the French Oaks) and Prix de Jockey Club (the French Derby) at Chantilly. Besides these there are many big-staked races at the other courses. There are no courses, as in England, which have both jumping and flat meetings. All in Paris are either one or the other.



THE GRAND-STEEPLE AT AUTEUIL.

Practically every class goes racing in Paris, and the course is one of the few places where one can see the *haut monde*. Naturally all the racing terms are English, as racing came from England, and a great many horses are given English names. This is sometimes somewhat confusing to the English-speaking visitor. I shall never forget how puzzled I was one day when I heard the crowd calling out during a race "Forrrjay-méno wins." I searched my card in vain, and it was only by comparing the colours that I arrived at the elucidation—the horse was "Forget-me-not"! Another just as puzzling was "Eelovoo" which turned out to be "I love you."

It is funny to hear the conversations of the racing world interlarded with English words, sometimes pronounced as they would be if they were French. It is quite the smartest thing for the *jeunesse dorée* to address each other in a curious mixture of French and English.

Of course, in Paris, the club enclosure, as known in England, is non-existent; every one can enter the *pesage* by a payment of twenty francs for men and ten francs for ladies. This gives access to the paddock and grand stands, though there is a certain portion of the latter reserved for members of the Jockey Club and various officials, etc. But no part of the *enclosure* is railed off as it is in England.

Another great difference is, to my mind, a very

pleasant one—the absence of the betting ring and its accompanying noise. Betting with bookmakers is not permitted, and all bets are made on the *pari mutuel*—or totalisator, as it is known in our colonies.

The stakes, as a rule, are considerably higher than they are in England, quite small races at obscure courses being worth £200 and £400 ; while it is no uncommon thing to see prizes of £800 and £1000.

A queer thing (to the Englishman's ideas) is the habit of horse-owners of racing their animals all the year round. When flat racing is over sometimes a valuable horse is trained over the sticks, then back it goes to the flat again ! Also cross-country racing in France goes on all the time. The Grand Steeple (equivalent to the Grand National in England) takes place in June.

Most of the jockeys and trainers are English, and at Chantilly and Maisons Lafitte (the two great training centres) there is quite a large English colony, nearly all the units of which are connected with racing.

One sees the same faces over and over again at the races. I fancy that there are some people who never miss a day—in fact, I have known some who as regularly drive off to the course as they take their morning coffee. Yet, for all this regularity, it is astonishing how ignorant of

the ordinary A, B, C of racing they will remain. The majority of the people on the stands does not seem to heed the little indications that every English sportsman notices at once. If, in the straight to the post, a jockey is sitting quite still on a horse two lengths ahead, and another jockey makes a final spurt, riding for all he is worth, that latter horse will be yelled by the onlookers. "So-and-so wins, So-and-so wins!" they scream excitedly. After the race is finished for an Englishman, and he has shut up his glasses, his neighbours are still confident that the other horse will win. It seems to me that very few Frenchmen look at the jockey—they all look at the horse.

Another amusing thing is the way isolated people will call their own choice. It does not matter if the horse is fifty lengths behind. "Hope springs eternal in the human breast," and the Parisian race-goer is a born optimist.

It is also comic to hear the arguments after a race. Every one gives his opinion freely as to which horse should have won, why it did not win, and how it would have won if such and such had happened. Jockeys are sometimes blamed quite unjustly; yet, when there is a flagrant instance of bad or mistaken riding, it sometimes passes completely unnoticed.

When the starting-gate was an innovation,

there was immense excitement amongst the racing public, and it led to many comic incidents. A break-away created vast excitement, few being able to realise that the race had not begun.

I should not care to be the official starter in France! The amount of abuse hurled at his (luckily unconscious) head is overwhelming. If a man has backed an outsider which has got off but half a length behind the other horses, he is quite sure that that horse would have won "if it had had fair play."

At one period the race-goer had a good deal to put up with, as far as bad starts are concerned. There had been several unfortunate upsets which he was justified in putting down to the start. There was a good deal of booing and hooting on various days: then the culminating injury arrived on one tragic 14th of October, four years ago. It was at Longchamp, the day of the famous Prix Gladiateur. The second race of the meeting, if I remember rightly, had begun with a bad start, but not a very bad one. However, coming as it did after one or two upsets of the days before, it made the people in the *pelouse* angry. There was booing and whistling, but nothing more. Then came the third race, in which two horses practically monopolised the betting.

Alas! the start was atrocious. There was no doubt whatever that the starter ought never

to have given it as a start. Some horses jumped off, others, including the two favourites, were left at the post, one had its back turned. The jockeys of these left horses naturally thought that it was no start, and remained quiet. But, to every one's astonishment, the advance flag fell, and the jockeys in the van went on, eventually an outsider winning.

Pandemonium reigned on the huge *pelouse* and the five-franc tribune, the people going mad with fury. But not till the prices went up did they realise that the race was really to hold good—then the dogs of riot were let loose.

From the grand stand in the *pesage*, it was the most extraordinary and exciting spectacle I have ever witnessed. The iron railings were torn up, the wooden posts and rails broken and used as weapons, chairs went flying thickly, the people swarmed on to the course, and tried to storm the *pesage*. The Municipal Guards came galloping to the rescue, but there were only a few troops there, and the authorities thought it wiser to keep them to guard the *pesage* and the treasury of the *pari mutuel*, so the crowd on the course had its own way. The booths of the *pelouse pari mutuel* were turned over, the tickets flew about in the air like confetti. The railings of the *pesage* were down in one place, and the whole force of soldiers was needed to keep the angry mob out.

Then, suddenly, as I watched, I saw a thin spiral of smoke over there in the densely-crowded *pelouse*. In a moment the cry went up from the stands, "They've set the booths on fire!"

The people had taken by force some of the motors, of which there are always a number waiting, and helped themselves to the petrol. This they poured over the booths and set fire to them. The firemen were telephoned for and came tearing up at a gallop—but they were useless. Their hoses were cut, the engine upset.

One after another the booths caught fire. Soon there was a great circle of blazing erections. The number-board shared their fate, the flames mounting high in the air. Then some one started a fire in the "little wood," which is a charming circular copse in the middle of the racecourse. In a few minutes the poor, beautiful trees were sending smoke and flames into the air, and it was soon a huge blaze.

No one can imagine the sight the whole ground presented. A furious, fiery furnace, with dancing, gesticulating, howling, attendant fiends.

A regiment came up at the gallop, and then there was a veritable battle. Chairs, rails, both wooden and iron, sticks and umbrellas, were used as weapons. I believe also some revolvers came into play.

I cannot remember how many people were

hurt, but the number was considerable, and I believe there were one or two killed.

Naturally, this riot lasted for hours, and the rest of the races had to be abandoned. The Prix Gladiateur was run later on at Chantilly, Longchamp being a wreck which took a long time to set right.

When the row began most of the French people left the grand stands in haste, and retired from the scene in their carriages. I think the Anglo-Saxons remained to a man, and, personally, I always feel glad I did not miss that day, it was the most thrilling incident of the kind I have ever seen.

Race days at Longchamp and Auteuil are seized by the dressmakers as the great opportunities to show off their new models. The *mannequins*, or some actresses, are dressed in the latest creations, and off they go to the races, where they strut about, followed by a crowd of small or great proportions according to the sensation of the dress. It was at Longchamp that the famous "harem" skirt made its appearance, and the wearers were mobbed. Here, also, the directoire skirt; and a lady, who appeared in a black satin dress slit up the side, scarlet silk stockings, and a diamond garter, created a good deal more interest than the races did. Doubtless, when the arbiters of the Rue de la Paix decide that we are to wear crinolines,

these atrocities will burst first on our horrified vision at Longchamp or Auteuil.

To the Anglo-Saxon, who is visiting a French racecourse for the first time, the sight of men tearing along with little slips of yellow or pink paper, calling out "First yellow," or "Second pink," must be puzzling. He must watch the persons holding out anxious hands for these slips with astonishment. It is but the account of the betting as it progresses. The method is this: One or two men rush round to all the *pari-mutuel* booths, where they jot down the number of tickets taken on each horse; with these results they tear back to headquarters, where a lightning calculator reduces them to odds; these are scribbled on the little slips, and then the men run about amongst the crowd and give the papers to those who have subscribed. Subscription for the meeting costs two francs, and for this one receives five slips for each race, the fifth being at the very end, just before the start.

The worst of it is that a great many of the big bettors wait by the *pari mutuel* to the very last moment before the bell rings to take their tickets, and this accounts for the sometimes extraordinary difference between the price of the winner and the odds quoted on the last slip. Many a person congratulates himself on having a six-to-one winner, waits with a grin of delight



THE PARI-MUTUEL.

for the price to go up on the board, and then groans with disappointment when he finds but three or four to one reported. A few five-hundred-franc tickets taken at the last moment will have completely altered the odds. Naturally the persons "in the know" do not want the price spoilt for them, and this accounts for their delay in taking their tickets. It is as well for a stranger who wishes for a "tip" to stand by the five-hundred-franc booth and watch for the "cute" late comers, but he must be able to take a high-priced ticket himself, as it is rare to find the lower-priced booths near the others. I have known many people who have been too late through waiting like this. A man has his money ready, tears up to a booth, waits for the queue in front of him to melt away, then, just as his hand is stretched out—clang! goes the bell, and the gratings come down automatically. The horses are off, and no more tickets can be detached. This is particularly annoying when your horse wins, and a substantial price goes up on the board! It happens to every one. One constantly hears scraps of conversation in front of the price-board—"Had my money in my hand." "Person in front of me was so slow." "Had actually asked for my number"—and so on. This is the great disadvantage of the totalisator. Automatic gratings wait for no man.

All the money is divided amongst those who have tickets for win or place, less eight per cent., which is deducted for the poor and the various societies which own the racecourses.

As I have remarked before, bookmakers are not permitted to ply their calling in France, and every one is supposed by law to take his tickets *personally* at the *pari mutuel*. But this does not prevent a good deal of surreptitious betting by concierges, valets, and small employés, though not nearly to the same extent as in England, who have their "little bit on," and wait anxiously for the evening *Paris Sport*, which gives the winners and prices. The odds are those of the *pari mutuel*, but whether the stakes eventually find their way to the booths I should not like to say.

In Paris an exceedingly respectable crowd attends the meetings. Whereas in England one associates racing with the noisy, somewhat disreputable throng, here it is quite different—I am naturally speaking of the one-franc enclosure. It is a well-dressed orderly crowd, and there is no drunkenness or rowdiness. Bearing this in mind, the riot I have described in this chapter becomes more astonishing.

At the Derby, if your carriage puts you down at some distance from the stand, it is a distinctly disagreeable experience to walk to your destination.

At the Grand Prix it is not in the least unpleasant to walk right across the *pelouse*. If you are a lady, your dress will create a good deal of polite interest, but that is all.

Another advantage for the racing public is the fact that practically a complete list of starters can be studied in the morning sporting papers. In England it is no uncommon thing for the papers to give a list of twenty or more horses in a race, and, when the numbers go up, for one to find perhaps half a dozen runners. In Paris this is not so, and the morning racing papers give a list of starters and jockeys from which one finds few absentees at the starting-post. Owing to this, the papers are able to give a full list of each horse's recent performances, and its form can be worked out before starting for the meeting—naturally a great help to the race-goer.

Altogether racing in Paris is a very pleasant amusement. There is no inconvenience of a hot and crowded train, with the subsequent arrival dishevelled and out of temper. There can be no disappointment at the last moment when those promised badges for the enclosure do not arrive. Every part of the enclosure can be visited but the weighing-room, and the paddock is conveniently situated in its midst.

The Englishman, who cannot imagine a race-

course without its attendant yelling “bookies,” may sneer at the totalisator, but habit is everything, and there are two distinct advantages—no one can bet without the money in his pocket, and no *mutuel* booth can be a welsher!

CHAPTER XVI

RESTAURANTS

NONE but the roast-beef Englishman will deny that Paris is, *par excellence*, the city for good food.

That perfect meals can be had in London restaurants, one knows, but the cooking there is also French, and the price is prohibitive for any except the comfortably-off.

But take the ordinary cheap English restaurant, and compare it with its prototype in Paris! There is no variety in the former—joint, vegetables (cooked in English fashion), and cheese. Beef, mutton; mutton, beef; and now and again veal. Egg courses are never given in restaurants proper in London. In the houses which cater for shoppers and women clerks one occasionally sees “eggs on spinach” or “scrambled eggs”—the former a poached egg on a gritty green island, with green water round it, the latter some lumps of dry yellow stuff which one strives to believe is egg.

In Paris, in every restaurant, from the grandest

to the cheapest, there is a choice of many egg *plats*, all delicious. I have lunched with students in restaurants where the whole repast, including wine, has come to one franc twenty-five (one shilling), and the meal has been excellent. The following is one of these *menus* :—

Omelette aux fines herbes

Tournedos, pommes soufflées

Cheese

Fruit

$\frac{1}{2}$ bottle of red or white wine.

All the food well cooked and cleanly served. Bread, of course, *ad libitum*, and a Parisian eats *yards* of bread with every meal. In the Duval restaurants, to be found in every corner of Paris, a choice can be made from a dozen or so egg-dishes, twenty or thirty meats, a dozen vegetables, a large number of sweets, cheeses, and fruits. A half-bottle of white wine costs fifty centimes. You can have quite an expensive meal at Duval's, or you can spend something under two francs. It is not a *prix fixe* place, but *à la carte*.

The *prix fixe* restaurants are very numerous, and they cater for all classes but the very rich; all the really *chic* restaurants are *à la carte*. The London 7s. 6d. or 10s. 6d. dinner is unknown in Paris. The Parisian *gourmet* prefers to arrange his own *menu*. He will consult lengthily and seriously with the waiter before he orders, taking advice

about sauces, etc. It is an art, this ordering of a dinner, and to watch a Parisian do it is an education. But the charm of the cheap restaurants is that each is not exclusively for one class—you need never say, “Oh, we can’t go in there; it’s too cheap.” That is one of the delights of Paris, to my mind; it is truly democratic. There are lunches and dinners at 1.25 *vin compris*, there are others at 1.50, 1.75, 2 francs, 2.50, 3 francs, and 4 francs. For the last you can go to a charming open-air restaurant in the Champs Élysées and have a dinner of six courses fit for any one to eat.

People are fond of saying that the days of the famous *gourmets* are dead. The Maison Dorée has gone, Tortoni’s has gone—restaurants which saw most of the famous men of Paris. But restaurants for the *gourmet* still exist, though few foreigners know of them. They are situated “far from the madding crowd,” and night after night they have their faithful clientèle—men who live to eat, not eat to live. There is one situated far up the boulevards, there is another hidden away in back streets near the Palais Royal, another in the busiest centre of commerce, another near the Luxembourg, and many others. They are famous for their cooks and their cellars. The *patron* knows every customer, and shakes hands and has a chat with each. The *plats* are treated tenderly by old waiters, who present them with a

loving look on their faces. Priceless old wine, in baskets, is carried to the tables by old gnarled hands, which put it down gently, with almost religious fervour.

There is something pathetic about these famous old restaurants. There is no catering for the fashionable crowd, no gaudy decorations of gold and white, no thick carpets—often the bare boards are sanded. Yet the old *bourgeois* clients go there year after year: when they die out what will happen?

There is a terribly poignant story of Guy de Maupassant's, which my readers may know. On a certain day in every year, for many, many years, some men used to meet at one of these quiet places for dinner. Year after year the waiter laid the many covers with tender joy. Year after year *one* was missing of the guests. Then one tragic night the now old, old man waited and waited patiently, and no one came. The last of the company had gone to join his friends in that country "from whose bourne no traveller returns."

If you want to visit these select circles, you must not go *en grande tenue*, or you will be looked upon with suspicion. These restaurants are not like *ces autres*—evening-dress means nothing here; some of the most plainly and shabbily dressed are the best clients.

How different from the smart restaurants

where dress means money, and you are attended to accordingly !

In Paris a famous and fashionable restaurant is not necessarily noticeable outside. Some of the most celebrated have almost dowdy exteriors. This sometimes leads to amusing episodes. Some friends of mine, an English clergyman and his daughter, were looking for a cheap restaurant for lunch. Like most clergymen, he was not overburdened with worldly wealth, and they wandered along the boulevards searching for something to meet their requirements. Presently they spied the Café Anglais. "Here," cried the father, "this looks a nice clean little place!" They went in and had an omelette and some cold meat and salad. Poor things! Their eyes were opened when they were presented with the bill. They could not make it out. When I told them afterwards that it was one of the most famous restaurants of Paris, they were astonished.

Prices vary enormously. If you wish to give a little dinner in one of these celebrated restaurants, it is as well to go in in the morning, say what you want, and bargain for the price.

I once went in this way with an Englishman, who had lived nearly all his life in France, to a very well-known restaurant. He wished to give a dinner for eight. He studied the *menu*, decided on what he wanted, and then asked the price per head.

“Forty-five francs, Monsieur,” said the *maître d’hôtel*.

My friend looked steadily at him, and remarked calmly, “I am French.”

The *maître d’hôtel* pretended to make another addition, then said sweetly, “Well, Monsieur, we will do it for forty.”

My friend said nonchalantly, “I am *still* French!”

“Thirty-five, Monsieur.”

“I have not changed my nationality!”

The price finally paid was twenty-two francs!!

If you do not ask the price beforehand, you have only yourself to blame if you are charged ten francs for a peach, for instance. Fruit is rarely priced on the *menus* of good restaurants, and they reckon on women, who are the chief sinners, asking for a peach, some strawberries, or a pear. But if the host is *au fait* with this “little dodge” it is easy to arrange matters in time.

There is one open-air restaurant which has a very unpleasant trick which is not so easy to circumvent. The prices are quite reasonable at this place, and it is frequented by not over-wealthy people. When you go in you find your table laden with the usual tempting little dishes of *hors d’œuvres*; there are ten, perhaps, of these. Now, as most restaurants of this class charge seventy-five centimes or one franc for *hors d’œuvres variés*, you will naturally say, “Oh, we’ll start with

these." If you look on the *menu* you will see at the top "*Hors d'œuvres*," but unpriced. You say to yourself, "Well, they can't charge more than a franc or so." And you begin to eat.

What is your surprise and disgust when you find on the bill *each* thing you have eaten charged for separately!—prawn, 45 c., sardine, 40 c., salade Russe, 80 c., tomato, 30 c., and so on. Before I knew of this trick the unfortunate host of my party had to pay thirty francs for *hors d'œuvres*—nearly as much as the rest of the dinner put together.

It is an extraordinary thing that the restaurant-keeper cannot see that chicanery such as this alienates clients.

In a few (luckily getting fewer every year) restaurants the customer must be very careful indeed, or he will be deliberately cheated. I remember one case where the waiter brought the bill to my host, folded over discreetly. Luckily we were all intimate friends, and on my murmuring, "Look at the prices," my host did so. He saw that six francs had been charged instead of four for some dish. He sent it back to the lady of the *caisse*.

Many apologies, bill brought back corrected. "Add it up!" I whispered. He did so. *The date was added in*, making a difference of fourteen francs ten to the total. My host began to look

angry, and he spoke very severely to the waiter, who explained in great perturbation that *Madame la caissière* was new; she was evidently useless. Bill brought back correct. My friend gave a note in payment. Change brought back. "Count it!" said I. Four francs fifty short. Then my friend walked to the other end of the room and demanded to see the proprietor—and "the feathers flew." I hope it did good: I do not know, as naturally I have never allowed any of my friends to go there again.

They keep this sort of thing exclusively for the unfortunate foreigner—a Parisian *always* looks at his bill.

For summer evenings what can be more pleasant than the dinners out in the Bois?

There are several restaurants in these charming surroundings. There you can sit under a striped umbrella or in an *al fresco bosquet* and eat food fit for the gods. Some of these places are possible only for the people with "money to burn," but others are quite reasonable. The cooking and wines are excellent, and a delightful orchestra plays, which, being in the open air, does not drown all conversation.

There is one difference between Parisian and London restaurants: in the French city some are noted for lunch, some for dinner, and some for supper. Naturally in *Paris* one is not turned

out at twelve or twelve-thirty when in the midst of eating! How the Parisian jeers at us for this—small wonder. It certainly is a very undignified proceeding to be herded out, like riff-raff from a public-house. In a supper-place, for instance, few diners will be seen, and *vice versa*.

Then there are restaurants which cater *exclusively* for suppers. These are chiefly in Montmartre, and they are open all night. At three in the morning on fête nights the fun is fast and furious. It is no use going early to any of these.

An amusing example of a foreigner's ignorance of hours happened the other day, when some friends of mine told me that they had been to a very famous "fast" restaurant in the hopes of seeing some fun. "There were only eight people there!" they cried, in injured voices. I was puzzled, as I know this place is packed night after night. "What time did you go?" I asked. "At one. We left at a quarter to three." I was still more puzzled. Quite by chance I found out that they had been to *lunch*!! This was the restaurant of which a wit said, "American women go there to point out each other as celebrated *demi-mondaines*!"

Of course, the Anglo-Saxon visits these restaurants because he wants to "see life." Very few French go except the *demi-mondaines*, and some men whose lives are passed in such *milieux*.

But it is no use going to these night restaurants to be shocked. If you go to Rome you must do as the Romans do, and it is absurd to visit a Montmartre night-haunt and look down your nose because a woman sits on a man's knee, or kisses him in public!

I have seen severe Anglo-Saxons look at each other and gasp with horror, "Isn't it awful!" Of course, it is "awful." What do they expect, these people?—a meeting of the Y.M.C.A.?

I have often gone with English friends who have come over to "see everything," and, though it is rarely "proper," it is seldom anything but cheerfully rowdy. Only twice have I seen men the worse for drink. One of these was an English youth who persisted in conducting the band, and was quite good-tempered. The other was an Austrian who lost his temper. But the latter was promptly turned out. Not even here do they permit bad-tempered drunkards.

The custom of dinner-parties in restaurants has not yet crept into Parisian good society. Dinners are given by the real *haut monde* at home. It is still not considered *comme il faut* for a *grande dame* to dine in public. This is a curious contrast to London and New York, where the restaurants are filled with the highest in the land. Only of comparatively late years have Parisian ladies gone to restaurants at all, and then it is usually

for the “fiv’ o’clock,” a great institution in Paris nowadays. Tea-shops are packed with Parisiennes ; it is considered quite the thing to do. Every big hotel caters for the tea-drinker now, and nearly every month sees a new tea-place opened—to be promptly crammed with customers. I remember (and it is very few years ago) when tea was a very new and *chic* amusement ; they did not like tea—in fact, they detested it—but it became *la mode*, and I believe that now some people really enjoy the tea itself. And the quantities of cakes and *tartelettes* they eat ! Even in these days, when fashion decrees that women must be as slim as possible, they still eat them. I have come to the conclusion that dieting makes no difference, otherwise *every* French person would be as fat as those one is occasionally startled by seeing.

How the hotels can make it pay to include cakes *ad libitum* in the tea-price I cannot imagine. I saw one woman one afternoon eat fourteen cakes and fruit-tarts !

Speaking of sweets reminds me (is this a paradox ?) that there is one dish one cannot get in Paris—the savoury. The French do not like them, and the restaurant-keeper has not yet grasped the fact that English people do. It will come some day, just as toast has. I remember when toast was unknown—if you asked for *pain grillé* they brought

a *petit pain* cut in half and grilled or baked ! Now toast appears as a matter of course.

A great charm of Paris restaurants to my mind is the service. From the famous restaurants down to the small and cheap ones you are recognised by the waiter or waitress if you have been there before—no matter how long before—and your tastes remembered. If you used to frequent a certain place, and have not been for months, you will be welcomed with joy, and probably the exact time of your absence noticed and regretted. Their memories are marvellous.

One more remark. When will the little-travelled Anglo-Saxon get out of his head that French cooking consists exclusively of “done-up messes,” sauces, and so on ? If you want a plain dinner you can get it in Paris cooked to perfection, even to “plain-boiled potatoes,” but there will be no water in the dish of the latter !

There are a few things which are done better in England. One is peas, and the Parisian is clever enough to realise this, and “*Petits Pois à l’Anglaise*” is on the *menu* of every good restaurant these days.



THE SHOPPING HOUR. RUE DE LA PAIX.

CHAPTER XVII

SHOPPING AND SHOPS

(This chapter is for women-readers !)

IF "Style is the dress of thoughts," as Lord Chesterfield said, certainly thought about dress makes style. It is the deep and serious reflection that the Parisienne gives to her person which makes her the best-dressed woman in the world. I must repeat here what I have said before, that there is no sudden dashing off to buy "something to wear" in Paris. Madame thinks and talks of nothing else for days before that important event—the ordering of a new dress.

In the beautifully decorated and luxurious suites of the celebrated dressmakers there are manifold arrangements for judging the charm of various combinations of materials and trimmings. Madame can see her choice in all lights, from strong sunlight to electricity. She can watch herself walking about in proxy—and if Madame happens to be short and fat, and the *mannequin* tall and most divinely fair, what

matter ? She has seen her dress on this daughter of the gods, and forever after she will see herself as such ; it is wonderful what imagination will do !

Even in the rooms of the humbler dressmakers there is a faint echo of the method of the great ones. There is a drawer full of pieces of many colours, wherewith effects can be tried, there is a long glass in three parts in which to study “all sides of the question,” there are thick curtains ready to be drawn when artificial light is needed. Then, although there are no *mannequins* to prance about in wonderful confections, there is the dress-maker herself, who sees at a glance what Madame ought to wear, and will proceed to illustrate her notion with silk and pins to her customer’s entire satisfaction. They all have taste and ideas, these dressmakers. They would never think of allowing some one to choose anything unbecoming. There is the difference between an English and French dressmaker. In London a woman enters a well-known dressmaker’s establishment, or goes to some old favourite—it is the same thing everywhere. *She* chooses what she wants, and her taste is rarely disputed.

I will not say that a Parisian *couturière* is always right, no one is infallible ; but I aver that she very rarely is mistaken in her ideas of what will or will not suit her customers.

And she is so clever in inventing little notions

to hide or lessen some imperfection. If Madame is too thin (very rare in these days of the thin woman rage !), if she is too fat, too short, too tall—then it is wonderful to watch the skilful hands manipulating drapery and trimmings. And the tact shown is remarkable.

I was once waiting in the waiting-room at my dressmaker's when, from the fitting-room, I overheard an enlightening conversation as follows :—

Customer—"I want the neck cut low. No collar."

Dressmaker—" *Parfaitement*, Madame."

Pause. Some action which I naturally could not see.

Dressmaker—"How charming Madame looks with that white tulle edged with pink against her cheek !"

Customer, in "purry-purry" voice—"It is rather becoming. You can use that for the *guimpe*."

Dressmaker, sorrowfully—"Alas, Madame, impossible. One cannot edge a *guimpe* with pink, one can do it only on a collar. It is a thousand pities Madame is to have no collar, her complexion looks *ravissante* with this pink. However, it is no good discussing it."

Pause. Some talk about a sleeve.

Customer, in doubtful voice—"Do you think the dress would look as well with a collar ?"

Dressmaker, still sorrowful—"Much better, Madame. However, we will not talk of it. . . .

Does Madame like this band of lace straight or crosswise ? ”

Customer, after much talk of lace and frills, and several pauses—“ Do you know, I think I will have a collar after all ! That pink is so charming.”

Dressmaker, joyfully—“ Oh, I *am* glad, Madame. I would not have thought of trying to persuade Madame, but I am sure it will suit Madame admirably.”

Some time afterwards the lady who was “ not persuaded ” passed through my room. She had no collar to her dress, and her neck was short, her chin double, and two deep wrinkles surrounded the yellow “ column.”

I told my dressmaker what I had overheard, and she chuckled. “ Well ! ” she said. “ What else can one do with ladies who are unreasonable ? ”

I agreed, and admired her diplomacy.

Every seller, from the head of a famous house to the *vendeuse* in the shops, takes a personal interest in the customer.

If it were not for the atmosphere, the crush, and the lengthy process of payment, the big shops in Paris would be the pleasantest in the world, and, even with these disadvantages, I personally would rather visit a Paris shop than its prototype in England.

It is impossible in French stores to be offered

white silk when you have asked for blue muslin ! If a colour does not match your pattern your *vendeuse* or *vendeur* will acknowledge it frankly, and take an infinite amount of trouble over the matter. To give an instance of the interest taken : I once went to one of the big shops to buy a fichu of some kind to put on an evening-dress to hide a stain of coffee spilt over me the evening before. My dress was pink and silver, so white would not do. I had to explain the matter to my *vendeuse*, who nearly wept over the history of the accident. We could find nothing to suit, so the head of the department was called into consultation, and the girl told him the whole circumstances. He opened drawers himself and displayed various scarves, some of which he himself discarded at once as unsuitable.

Then another *vendeuse* came up, having overheard our conversation. She suggested something from another department, and ran off to bring it. I hated giving so much trouble—I fear I belong to the class which buys anything rather than turn over the whole shop in a vain search—but they would not hear of my buying something which they did not consider pretty. One thing was too heavy, another was “not at all the pink to suit Madame” (after each one of them holding it against Madame’s face), another was not the *mode*. At last one of the girls came

running from a distant quarter triumphantly waving a really lovely scarf.

“Ah!” sighed in ecstasy the shopwalker and the other girl. I echoed “Ah!” in gratitude. It was exactly what was needful.

You may choose something at a counter, and your *vendeuse* will say, “Yes, it is very pretty, but I think I can find one that will suit Madame much better,” and off she will fly, returning with joy to display her find.

I have never found this kind of interest in English shops, as a rule the sellers are only too thankful to sell you the first thing you see.

I was trying on some models once of embroidered linen frocks. I tried on five, but, though two of them did very well, my interested tryer-on would not think of me buying until I had tried all. Finally, she decided that the first dress of all was the best, and made me try it on again, and insisted on the dressmaker being sent for to make some—to me—invisible alterations.

They are good-tempered, delightful souls, these shop-girls, and I think only twice in my whole experience have I had to complain of sulky want of interest.

Even at the end of a hot, tiring day they remain sweet and charming, and Heaven knows that ten hours of serving the most *exigeante* shoppers in the world are enough to disturb the temper of a saint.

But, though the sellers are angelic, other things are most irritating. On crowded days—and from twelve to two are the only hours when Paris shops are not crowded—there are not enough sellers, and the tired shopper has to stand patiently in a row, a ticket clutched in her hand, and wait till her number is called. It is most upsetting to one's dignity, and, when there has been a score or so before me, I have often walked away without waiting for what I needed. The French is the most patient race in the world, and truly democratic in this respect, inasmuch that a well-dressed lady, ready to spend two or three hundred francs, has to take her turn with the humble, hatless girl with her one- or two-franc want.

I have remarked in another chapter on the senseless paying *caisses*, where one stands in a queue, waiting till those in front have paid, or till *Monsieur le caissier* has added up his accounts. Every article bought has to have its price verified by men who stand there for the purpose examining all the labels. Another annoying custom is for the girls who go with you and your purchases to the *caisse* to be given *en route* some other customer's goods to debit at the same time. She sometimes forgets which was the first, and you may have to wait at the *caisse* while a long string of things is entered, added up, and paid for,

before you have your turn. I have protested against this once or twice, but every one concerned is so astonished at one's bothering over order of priority that it requires some courage.

You must never be in a hurry when you go to the big shops, and you must never mind pushing—I fear I fail in both respects. It certainly makes me most irritable to feel a large warm hand placed flat on my back with an evident desire to push me on one side. You must stroll with the crowd down the long, narrow aisles, you will arrive at your destination some time or other, and it is no good worrying.

Except in the costume department there is no room to move quickly, and no chairs. Our idea of long open shops with counters and chairs on either side is an unknown one. Every yard of space is blocked up with different hanging stands, or flat square counters covered with goods. You are squeezed and pressed and hustled, you plead vainly for a *vendeur*, some one's umbrella digs into your back, some one else's hat-pin wounds your neck, you think that life is not worth living, and that you will never, never buy another thing. Then, in the end, you get a soft-voiced, charming seller, who finds you the very thing you dreamed of, but never hoped to procure. And surely in no other city do dreams like this so often come true! The Parisian inventor seems to have

thought of everything that brain of woman can desire.

If you want to trim a hat yourself you will find your trouble *nil*, everything is sold that you can need, even to linings all ready to place in position. All the fashions as they appear are copied in the great stores. There are ingenious designs for turning a *démodé* dress into a quite up-to-date one, and the same with hats—even crowns of hats are sold separately, and, as it is chiefly the crown which “gives away” your last year’s hat, this is most soothing to the economical dresser.

A nasty little habit of some of the shops is to send out a sale catalogue, with which you go armed on the opening day and demand some special article. You are naturally furious when a sympathetic shop-walker tells you that all are sold. It is only quite lately that I have discovered that, if you make yourself disagreeable, the article you need will “be procured” and sent to you the same day! I hope my female readers will be grateful to me for this information!

Another custom which the Anglo-Saxon often wonders at is the outside selling of all the big shops.

All round the shops on the pavement are counters piled with “bargains,” and on the days when some specially tempting prices are announced

it is almost impossible to pass along these sidewalks, for the crowd of anxious buyers sometimes spreads out to the road. If you are not in a hurry it is amusing to watch the crowd for a time. Serious housewives weighing and tapping saucepans and cups; young couples feeling the thickness of little carpets; neat, hatless women trying on scarves, and judging the rival attractions of hat shapes before a looking-glass, and even a few men holding up ties against their collars with interested faces.

The aim and object of every French shopkeeper is to sell as many goods as possible, and these outside stalls undoubtedly attract the casual passer-by.

Englishwomen have often asked me why they can never get pattern-books in Paris. My own private opinion is that the cost seems too great to the shopkeeper. "Penny wise, pound foolish," of course, but, as I have said elsewhere, a Parisian thinks only of the initial cost, and not of the returns that expenditure may bring. Anyway, there is no such thing as patterns as known in England. If you go to a shop and ask for patterns of shot silk, for instance, the *vendeur* will take you up to the silk counter and show you rolls of silk. Of each one he will say, "Do you want a pattern of that?" and then grudgingly cut off a tiny snippet, gum a little label on its back with

price and width, and add his own number. This is repeated each time you say "Yes," until you feel that it is really disgraceful of you to have asked at all for samples. The only pattern-books I have ever seen are at the dressmakers', and these are sent out by the wholesale houses.

A curious custom in Paris is for shops to carry on business under a "dedicated name," instead of the name of the owner. Every Anglo-Saxon knows some of these: Au Printemps, Aux Galeries Lafayette, Au Louvre, for instance. But the big shops are not the only ones, and sometimes the designation is comic. How would these look in London?—To the Happiness of Ladies; To the 100,000 Shirts; To the Great Collar; To the Jumping Dog; To the Temptation (bonnets, of course); To the Unbreakable Baby.

The Rue de la Paix is known from end to end of the world as the shopping street *par excellence* for those fortunate ones who have plenty of money. Here, and in the Place Vendôme, are situated nearly all those famous houses whose names bring a sigh of envy to the lips of the woman who "would an' she could."

Very refined and discreet are the outsides of these houses, the windows of some decorated with boxes of beautiful flowers. At the side of the *porte-cochère* is a modest plaque with the great man's name inscribed on it—that is sometimes

the only indication of the wealth above. The luxury of the suites of apartments is extraordinary, and priceless laces and stuffs are flung about with apparent carelessness over tables and chairs.

The trying-on-rooms are the last word in comfort, everything a woman can want is laid out on the toilet-tables, they are warm (sometimes too warm) in winter, cool and shaded in summer.

Money is spent like water in these establishments, and practically *any* price can be given for a dress.

It is a marvellous sight, the Rue de la Paix, on a fine afternoon in the season. The carriages and motors stand three and four deep before the doors of the mighty, and exquisitely-dressed women of all nations step daintily across the pavement, and are escorted to the lift by gorgeously-liveried attendants.

I advise those foreigners who would see this street under another aspect, to stroll there at mid-day. Then the *midinettes* pour from the doors in hundreds, intent on lunch.

Poor little people, so gay, so neat, with their beautifully coiffed, often hatless, heads.

They are the work-girls, employed by the great dressmakers and *modistes*.

I was in an hotel once whence, from my dressing-room window, I could look right into the work-rooms of one of the most famous dressmakers in



MIDINETTES LEAVING WORK AT NOON,



the world. I used to watch for hours the untiring fingers of the countless *midinettes*. How they would spring up and stretch themselves joyfully when the bell rang for the midday rest. Then what a scramble for the glass ! For even a little overworked and underpaid work-girl in Paris thinks of her personal appearance.

How they used to chatter and laugh, these girls, but the chatter used to become a little more subdued as the day wore on, and often in the afternoons I would see hands pressed to weary heads.

How they manage to be gay at all puzzles me. Life for them must be a constant struggle to keep body and soul together. It is proverbial that many of these girls are shockingly underpaid.

This week, as I write, the milliner girls have started a syndicate of their own, to be affiliated to the General Labour Confederation. More than five hundred girls have already joined, and they hope that in six months the Association will number several thousands. One girl told an interviewer that she earned two shillings and a penny per day of twelve hours ; this day in the height of the season extends to fifteen and seventeen hours. Moreover, most of the girls are out of work for six months in the year.

This is a distressing state of affairs. How can a girl live on two shillings per day ? Some live at

home with their parents, of course. Is it surprising that others have *cher amis* ?

At lunch-time they crowd round the little fruit carts and buy two sous' worth of cherries, a banana, or orange. Then they enter a baker's shop and buy a *petit pain* or *croissant*. With this they wend their way in winter to the nearest *café Biard*, and there they sit at the high counter with a ten-centime glass of coffee, and eat their frugal repast. In summer you can sometimes see a group of them having a picnic in the Tuileries Gardens. Such a cheap little picnic, but flavoured with gaiety.

Poor, little, gay, careless souls, slaving their lives away to make great ladies beautiful. How they must long sometimes to put on some of the lovely dresses their clever fingers help to make ! For every Paris woman pines for dress, however poor she is.

There is one day in the year when the *midinette* is in her glory. St. Catherine seems to have been adopted by her as patron saint, and on St. Catherine's day she strains every sinew to make herself charming—and generally succeeds.

Coiffée de Ste. Catherine, strictly speaking, means an old maid, but as most of the *midinettes* are young, though unmarried, it does not matter. They wear wreaths and rosettes, and the windows of the dressmakers and hat makers are crowded with a



MIDINETTES. AN AL FRESCO MEAL.

laughing throng. It is the one day in the year when they are allowed full license.

Of course they have their public holidays, but I know that many of them work on these fête days sooner than lose their paltry wage.

Yet they are to be envied in a sense. The optimistic French nature prevents them sinking to the level that the Anglo-Saxon does in like circumstances. The casual observer seeing the merry stream at midday would think that they were highly favoured by the gods. Perhaps they are—let us hope so. After all, to eat and drink one's fill, and have a bed of rose leaves, may not mean happiness always.

CHAPTER XVIII

FÊTES AND FASTS

THERE are seven holidays in the year in France, the chief of which is the National Fête day—the 14th of July—the anniversary of the taking of the Bastille. On this day, Paris, as well as every remote corner of France, is given over to festivity. In Paris it begins at eight o'clock by the great annual review of the troops on the racecourse of Longchamp. The people stream out to the Bois in their thousands; from five o'clock in the morning a long procession is to be seen wending its way towards the huge arena—on foot, in carts, in cabs, and in every possible conveyance; and nearly every family of the poorer classes has its accompanying load of provisions, for they are going to make a day of it. It is a queer and interesting sight to see the Bois on the 14th of July, with its hundreds of groups picnicking on the grass, and watching the *haut monde* returning in its carriages from the review, or driving out to the races in the afternoon. Then in the evening the crowds stream back to Paris for the dancing. In every



AN OPEN-AIR BALL ON THE 14TH JULY.

Place, and at a large number of street corners, are erected bandstands decorated with streamers of paper flowers and flags. Here the bands play, and the people dance in the streets—and it is quite a serious business this dancing. It is in the blood, and every little *midinette*, and every errand-boy, can dance. There is no rowdiness, no drunkenness at these fêtes in Paris. I have stood and watched the dancing in every corner of Paris, and never once have I seen any objectionable horse-play. This dancing is not confined only to the 14th; for a night, and sometimes two nights, before, the bands play and the people dance, and for one night after, but of course the great day is the most in favour.

The café which happens to be situated close to one of those bandstands does a roaring trade, and all the little tables are full, and they spread out on either side in front of neighbouring shops, and right into the road. But, whereas in England the drink consumed would be largely spirits, here it is *syrops*, light wines, and the innocuous French beer, and these drinks affect neither the heads nor the feet of the people.

Right through the night these dances are kept up, and the dawn points rosy fingers of astonishment at these still-dancing couples—tired, doubtless, but quite ready to dance again the next night.

On La Fête Nationale every public building is

decorated with flags and bunting, and illuminated at night. And not only the public buildings, but very, very many private ones. Nearly every shop and office contributes to the general gaiety of the scene.

The Place de l'Hôtel de Ville is a very good place for a foreigner to visit if he has never seen these people's dances. There there is always a famous band, and the huge façade of illuminated buildings and the gorgeous decorations add to the gaiety of the scene. Then, on the bridges and quays of the river close by, you can stand and watch the fireworks, received with excited "O—hs" of delight by the immense crowd waiting and watching.

I can hear the Anglo-Saxon who has never mixed in any but his own native crowds mutter scornfully, "Go into the crowd and watch the dancing and fireworks? Not much! Be pushed and crushed and hurt by a rowdy lot of drunken brutes? No, thank you!"

Entirely wrong, good sir! The French people on pleasure bent are the most patient, gentle, charming creatures in the world.

When I was writing my Apache novel, *Wind along the Waste*, I visited, helped by indications from the police, Apache dancing-halls and cafés. Even in these haunts of the very dregs of society there was no drunken rowdiness. The company

was there to enjoy itself, and whatever these men may be when "at work," at play they were gay and well behaved.

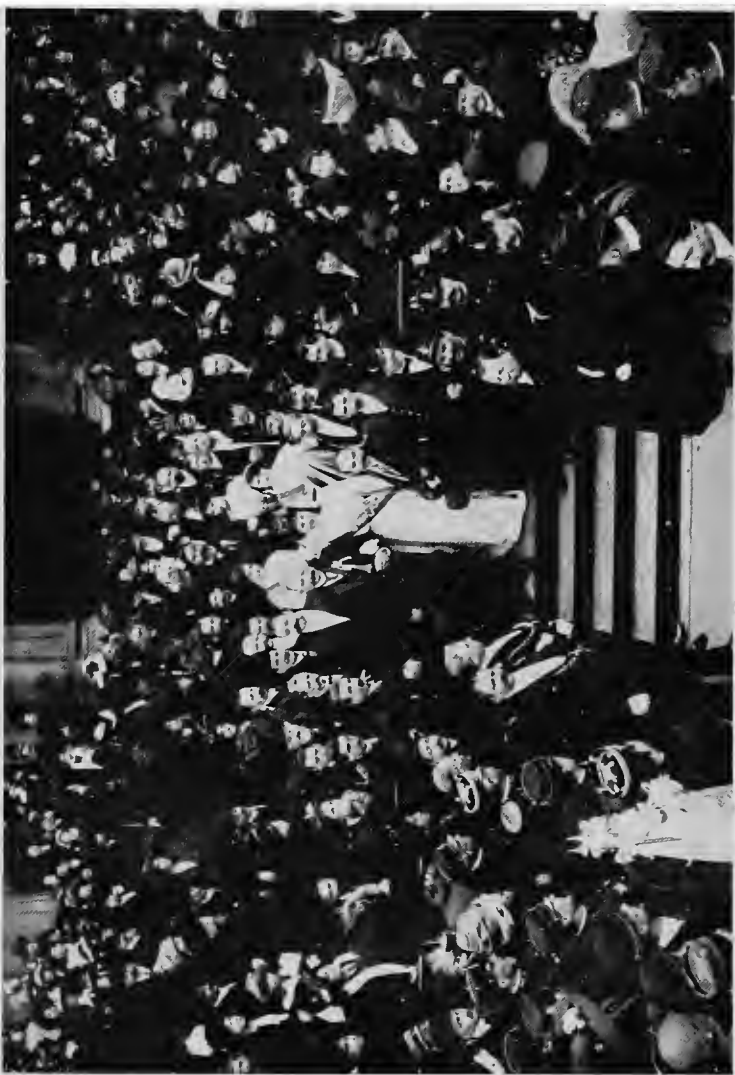
Many, many times have I stood in a dense crowd for some event or other, and never have I had the slightest occasion to regret it. One must remember that a Frenchman *en fête* throws off the hustle of his working days, and does not push or scramble, and the impoliteness I have referred to in another chapter vanishes with his workaday clothes. He is now waiting to see some show, and he can be quite patient—it is a totally different thing from when he is rushing to see "Monsieur Dupont" about that little *affaire* which may put a few sous in his pocket! No, a Parisian pleasure-bent crowd is most lovable. Even the soldiers and police who keep order enter into the spirit of the thing—apropos, a little instance which touched me one day: I was passing up the Champs Élysées by accident, and saw the dense crowds lining each side of the road, with soldiers keeping the way, and I remembered that a certain King was just about to arrive on a visit. I saw a small opening and thought that I might just as well wait and see the King, so I stood patiently with the patient crowd, and saw the President, and the military governor of Paris, and various smart officers go down to the station to meet the royal personage. Then, in the short wait before the procession

appeared, I noticed just in front of me a small child of the people who was trying to peer out between the soldiers' legs. A spick-and-span officer was there, giving orders, and presently he stepped back into the line of soldiers. Lo and behold, the little girl advanced gingerly, and, as she heard the band music approaching, she clutched the officer's sword-hilt, bending forward, all aglow with excitement. Down went that man's hand on to the head of the mite, which he pushed forward at his side. So, holding eagerly on to the sword, her wee face beaming, she stood proudly, and had a better view of the procession than any of us.

Rather delightful, I thought; I wanted to pat the shoulder of that smart officer and say nice, flattering things to him!

A Paris crowd is always kind to children. Men and women will squeeze themselves nearly flat while they pass the small people through the serried ranks to the front. Men will take little strangers up and perch them on their shoulders so that they can see well over the heads of all around, and many a time have I seen grown-ups make room on the chairs or benches for which they have paid for some small person who otherwise would be able to see nothing. The love of children is engrained in the French; they are the fondest parents in the world.

Mardi Gras and *Mi-Carême* are two roystering



THE REINE DES REINES LEAVING THE HÔTEL DE VILLE, ESCORTED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE
MUNICIPAL COUNCIL.

days ; though not holidays in the strict sense, no one would know it, for Jean and Pierre and Jeanne and Mimi turn out in their thousands to throw confetti and watch the *Mi-Carême* procession with its *Reine des Reines* and her attendants. My advice to foreigners who wish to really study the Parisian is to go in the crowd on these occasions ; he will not regret it. Good temper and lightness of heart reign, and one can stroll along the roads quite calmly until the soldiers begin to clear the way for the procession, and even then there is no horrible pushing to get to the front ; the crowd, laughing and chatting, quietly steps backwards, and those who find themselves in the front are the lucky ones—that is all. A few at the back, who have sous to spend, hire a chair or bench to stand on, and these are envied by the less fortunate.

If a Parisian is told by a municipal guardsman or a policeman to go here or there, he goes without question ; the meekness of the Parisian where authority is concerned is extraordinary. These people never seem to become impatient or peevish. Watch for a time the crowd outside the Opera or one of the other State theatres on a day when there is going to be a free performance. All day from early morning the people have dribbled up till the queue stretches right round the building—how patient they are, how good tempered ! They bring their little folding stools on which they sit,

the women sewing, the men reading papers, and all the time they chatter, chatter, chatter. Their string bags are produced at meal-times, and food spread over their laps; each family eats and drinks, perfectly unconscious of the passer-by. When the doors open they file in quietly, a few at a time, as allowed by the controlling attendants.

I do not know why it is, but a holiday in Paris always seems to me so much more *happy* than in any other country. The people are such children; they all seem to enjoy their pleasure so heartily, and are like one big family. There is no stiffness and aloofness; every one speaks to every one else in a crowd—one can have quite interesting discussions with one's neighbours. When the Queen of Queens' car passes, for instance, on *Mi-Carême*, there is always an excited argument as to whether she is really pretty, or whether that blonde maid-of-honour on her right is not very much more beautiful. As other cars pass people ask each other what they mean, and perhaps some clever man who has an official list of the procession reads out the name of each car as it appears for the benefit of *ces autres*.

The cry of the confetti-sellers rings perpetually: "Qui n'a pas son kilo?" And great is the trade they do, for nearly every one has a kilo-bag, and on a fine day (the gods are usually kind, it is very seldom wet) the fun is fast and furious. A few



THE MI-CARÊME PROCESSION.

fancy dresses and masks are seen in the crowd, and many, many children are "dressed up" by their fond mothers as pierrots and soldiers, and so on. These wee people have a lovely time; they shriek with laughter as they throw their tiny handfuls of confetti at each other, and the big people seldom forget them, and throw the coloured paper discs at them as they pass.

And what a good time a pretty girl has! It will take her hours to get the little bits of paper out of her clothes and hair—but what matter? The longer it takes her the better she will be pleased—it will show how popular she was!

Oh, the mad, merry days: I am glad that carnival still exists. It is not as mad and merry as it used to be, they say, but I think it will be a very long while before the poor old King dies. Let us hope so. A long life to you, old King!

There are other holidays that are sober ones—some without any character at all—just holidays. On these the little *bourgeois* family goes out quietly to the country, or to the Bois, if it is summer, and takes food with it, and plays games, and probably ends up with a theatre in the evening.

New Year's Day, which takes the place of the Anglo-Saxon and German Christmas, is, of course, a great present-giving fête. On the 1st of January one sees, all day long, men from the big flower and sweet shops wending their way along the streets

with lovely bouquets and baskets of flowers, or white-enveloped and ribbon-tied boxes. The salon of a popular lady on New Year's Day is a bower of beauty, and the sweets ought to last her till next year if she values her figure !

Then in the afternoon it is *de rigueur* to pay visits, or rather to leave cards, as no one is in, every one being intent on doing exactly the same thing. It is surprising how even the quite small *commerçants* have their visiting-cards—printed in this case, not engraved—their names surrounded by many flourishes.

Cabs are at a premium. Round and round Monsieur et Madame go, with fat card-cases, and it is astonishing how many calls can be accomplished in the afternoon.

There is always a curious group of people outside the Élysée palace, for on this day all the ministers call on the President, and carriage after carriage drives up, with its top-hatted owner *très correct*, to pay his respects to the head of the State.

So, on the whole, though the second most important holiday in the year, the *Jour de l'An* is a somewhat boring one.

The 1st of November, *Toussaint*, is a holiday, but a sad one. This day and the next—*le Jour des Morts*—is devoted by the Parisians to the remembrance of their dead. Nearly every one wears black on these two days, and one meets

hundreds of people carrying flowers and wreaths, wending their way to the cemeteries. The worker who cannot visit the graves on the 2nd of November, which is not a holiday, goes on All Saints' Day, and it is a curious and very beautiful sight to see the large cemeteries on both these days. A never-ending stream of black-clad, flower-laden people pass in at the gates from early morning to closing-time.

On *Toussaint* twenty thousand people visit Père Lachaise alone, and it is estimated that £4000 is about the worth of the flowers, real and artificial, placed on the graves of this cemetery. About twenty-five to thirty thousand is the number of visitors on the Day of the Dead. And, taking all the best-known cemeteries, we get the enormous total of one hundred and ten thousand for this day alone; for the two days it is not far short of two hundred thousand.

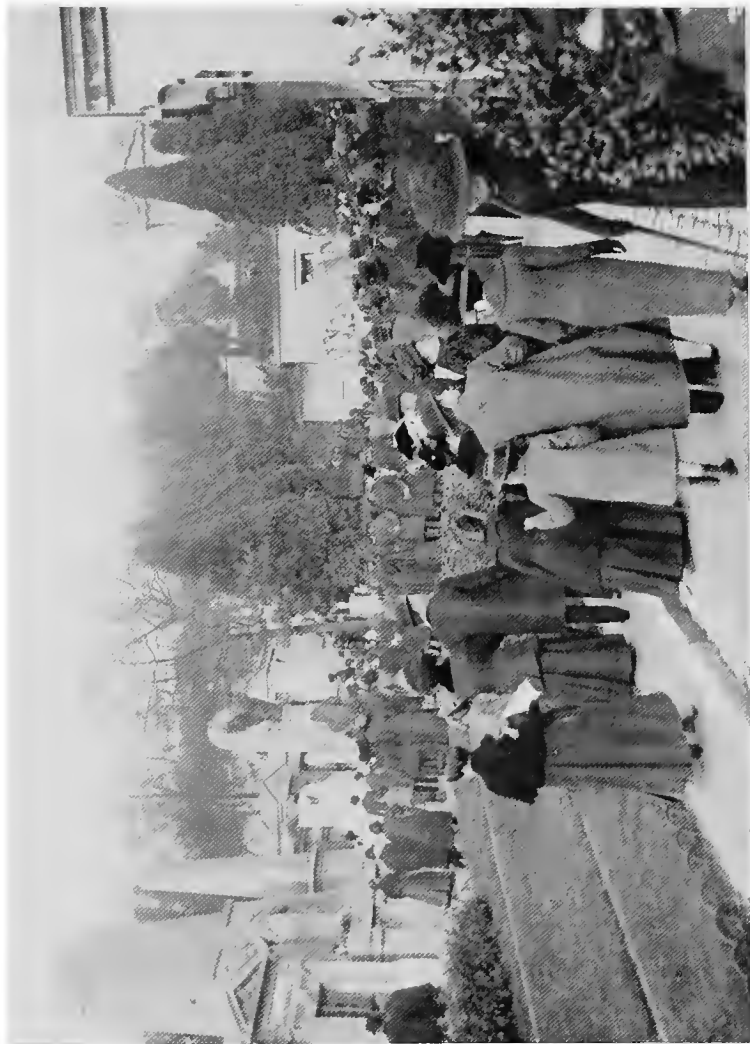
The florists rely on the 1st and 2nd of November as the two most profitable days in the year. One year they reckoned that £12,000 was spent on chrysanthemums.

Certain cemeteries open only on a few days throughout the year. The 2nd November is always one of these days. One is the Picpus, in the grounds of the old convent of the Dames du Sacré-Cœur. It is here we find Lafayette's grave, and La Rochecauld's, and here are buried in one common

grave 1340 martyrs of the Terror. The grass grows rank and high on this large plot, and you look at it through a grating. I wonder, does one of the visitors ever throw in a blossom in memory of these poor, long-dead victims of Fouquier-Tinville? Often a flower or two is spared for the other deserted graves, the Heloïse and Abelard tomb has its offering (some happy lover perhaps, who, in his happiness, has remembered this most unhappy couple), and many long-since-forgotten dead, but these nameless thirteen hundred are indeed resting in oblivion, and only the birds chant a song over the long green grass. Do their shades ever enter on the *Jour des Morts* with the black-clothed visitors, and wonder why their enclosure is neglected? Poor shades! To be nameless is to be forgotten.

Christmas Day is not strictly a holiday in France, but by general consent it is made one, though it is not the great fête it is in England, New Year's Day taking its place as a present-giving festival.

Though the law has separated Church and State in France, and it is her pleasure to be regarded as irreligious, it is amusing to note that the Church fête days have not been discarded! Ascension and Assumption are still holidays, and, falling as they do in the spring and summer, are very widely enjoyed ones. It does not seem to strike the powers-that-be that this is somewhat inconsistent ;



PÈRE LACHAISE CEMETERY (SHOWING THE MONUMENT "TO THE DEAD") ON THE JOUR DES MORTS.

when it does, doubtless these festivals will be replaced by others—I suggest *quatre-Septembre* for one!

It is certainly very charming the way the French Government arranges pleasures for the people on the fête days. There are free representations at the State-owned theatres, and, as I have remarked before, these performances are very popular. The Parisian is eminently a theatre-goer, and when the show costs him nothing—well, that naturally adds to the enjoyment.

Another privilege which strikes one as very touching is that, on certain holidays, the beggars are allowed to beg openly, and on these days one wonders where they hide themselves all the rest of the year. They appear in swarms, and it is as well to go out supplied with a quantity of sous, for, genuine or not, it is certainly sad, this collection of the maimed, the halt, and the blind, thrust into the midst of a pleasure-intent crowd of gay and laughing people.

Talking about beggars reminds me of a very curious thing which I have always been unable to explain—I have never seen a “pavement-artist” in Paris. The nearest approach to it is the pathetic bearded figure of the little man with stumps instead of hands, who sits on a small stool and paints pictures in black and white on card-boards which rest on his knees. They are clever,

these sketches, and I often wonder as to his history—was he an artist, a student in some well-known atelier? And did he lose his hands in some terrible accident? He never asks for money, and if you feel charitable you have to thrust your sous on to his card. He does not look up; he just goes on painting.

But I have wandered from my subject of fêtes.

There is one thing I should wish to add: I should like every Britisher who has by chance visited, say, Hampstead Heath on a bank holiday, to spend the 14th of July in Paris, and go about amongst the people. I fear the contrast will not redound to our credit. The sense of humour of Bill and 'Arry is not a pleasant one on these occasions, still less pleasant when the evening is reached, and the public-house has received him for the many visits he considers necessary for his enjoyment. The changing of hats with his inamorata, and the squirts (I believe the classical name is "teasers"), the shouting and singing, make a terrible *tout ensemble*.

I believe statistics declare that the consumption of spirits is on the increase in France. This may be so, but I fancy it is amongst the upper classes—where "visky-soda" has become the fashion in emulation of the English—for the disastrous results are certainly not yet noticeable in the crowds on the fête days. The Parisians seem to

achieve to a delightful degree the possibility of being able to enjoy themselves without drunkenness. The drunken man one sees occasionally (and he is very, very rare) is looked at with round eyes of wonder and disgust, and he is not supposed to have accomplished a rather clever and much-to-be-envied result.

CHAPTER XIX

ROWS AND RIOTS

IN no city in the world are street-rows so entertaining as they are in Paris. The reason may be that no people but the French have the capacity for taking a whole-hearted interest in some one else's affairs.

If there is a dispute between two persons the crowd will take sides and argue about it excitedly. If some one arrives too late to see or hear the commencement, he will have the whole matter explained to him by gesticulating, vivacious onlookers, and the rights and wrongs of the affair placed before him energetically.

A row is a great opportunity for the *flâneur*; you will see his face light up as he strolls towards the centre of attraction, and he will stand there till the bitter end, giving his opinion freely; and, long after the disputants have vanished, he will remain on the spot arguing with another *flâneur* about the incident.

If there is any one hurt the crowd will break into two parts—one will follow the aggressor to

the police-station, the other will stream after the victim to the chemist's shop, and stand patiently outside until he leaves, either on his feet or in the ambulance.

Sometimes rows are tragic, sometimes screamingly funny, but in all cases they are exceedingly interesting because of the utter lack of self-consciousness of the Parisian. Two men having a heated argument are as utterly unconscious of the enthralled crowd surrounding them as if they were alone in a desert. Their private affairs are ventilated, and family differences shouted forth in a manner that is somewhat startling to the sober Englishman, who thinks that this type of vituperation is confined to the lowest classes—and I am not speaking only of the submerged tenth; most of the rows I have seen have been between quite respectable persons. Even the *jeunesse dorée* is not above a fracas in public—witness the numerous duels, a large percentage of which have their origin in a public assault.

But it must not be thought that all little arguments end in violence. The onlooker may every moment think that the controversialists have arrived at the point where brute force is the only logical conclusion—but no! Nine times out of ten the brawlers content themselves with words, words, words. You watch and listen, and think to yourself that, long before, Anglo-Saxons would

have come to fisticuffs, and while you are wondering when the scuffle will begin, the brawlers part, walk away slowly, each surrounded by his partisans, and each flinging at the other last sallies of denunciatory opinions, each trying to make his obloquy more scathing than that of his enemy.

I saw an amusing instance of this war of words one day. Scene, a public garden. *Dramatis personæ*, two respectable men, very red, flashing eyes, trembling hands—in short, very angry indeed. They bawled, they screamed, they spluttered with rage. They shook their fists in each other's faces. They gesticulated violently. Their abuse was Eastern in its completeness—not one single member of either's family was worthy. We listeners heard all about the little failings of the stouter man's second cousin, and about the scandal attaching to the thinner man's great-aunt. Surely it *must* come to blows? No. After ten minutes or so of language which ought to have withered the flowers around, they parted. But see! they are both turning—they meet again. It is but some terrible thing each had forgotten about a distant relation of the other! This was repeated several times, and several times the interested audience hoped for something really thrilling. Then at last, with bitter "Phaugh" and contemptuous shrugs, they parted quickly, and one

sat down on a seat, swaying his leg furiously, blowing and panting.

Presently, from at least fifty yards away, came marching back the other, light of triumph in his eye. He walked right up to his antagonist—who rose to meet him—paused for one dramatic moment, then hurled in his face the last overwhelmingly awful thing he could think of. With enormous joy he shrieked one word, then marched away, smiling with delight. The word (pray do not blush with horrid anticipation) was SNOB! He pronounced it schnobb, but his intention was good. Oh, angry Anglo-Saxon, who one day hurled this calumny at your fellow-countryman, little did you think under what circumstances the word would be repeated!

A crowd with a tipsy man as the centre of attraction is very rare in Paris. As I have remarked elsewhere, and as is generally known, the Parisian is very sober. When a reeling person is, by any chance, making himself conspicuous, people seem to regard him as an object of pity rather than for chaff and pointed wit as in England. The police treat him gently, advise him to go home, perhaps help him tenderly into a cab. The reason for this may be that the drunkard in Paris is very rarely violent; he is cheerful or maudlin: in the first case his humour runs to hilarious songs, in the latter to tears.

Personally, I can never see anything particularly amusing in a person who has drunk too much. I can remember only one instance when it was really humorous. I had a flat once in a street where there was a chemist exactly opposite. Noticing one very hot summer's evening that there was an unusual buzz of voices outside, I went on to the balcony to investigate. Outside the chemist's shop was a very large crowd, and also a cab with luggage on it. As I say elsewhere, the chemists in Paris are educated for first aid, and I naturally thought there had been an accident. Through the plate-glass window I could faintly perceive the two chemists supporting a woman with her hat and collar removed, and dosing her with something. Curiosity being a failing of my sex, I sent a maid down to see what had happened. She returned with no information, except that the cabman had said that the lady was ill. Two policemen were guarding the door of the shop, so no further particulars could be procured.

The crowd became larger and larger; traffic had to go very slowly. Then at last Madame appeared from the private entrance, supported by a policeman and the chemist. The moment the *gamins* saw her (and *gamins* see everything) they raised a cheer. Wild hilarity reigned in our street. Oh, the crowd knew all about it—trust a Parisian crowd to be thoroughly *au courant* with

any happenings—Madame was helped into the cab, and there she stood up unsteadily and waved to the cheering crowd. The policemen got in too, and held her swaying form. One was very fat and very dignified, and he tried gently to make her sit down before the moving cab should spell catastrophe. Behold, Madame turned to him, and murmuring something tender, flung her arms round his neck and gave him two resounding kisses. That policeman's face really *was* funny, and the crowd went wild with joy. I must own I myself became rather weak from laughing.

Disputes and rows are very often comic.

A lady who was sure she had had her purse stolen, and was screaming for the police, was distinctly funny when she found it in her petticoat pocket.

I saw two omnibuses delayed for ten minutes once because a husband and wife had a difference of opinion as to which they were to take. Monsieur was clinging on to the rail of one, Madame to the other, and they argued at the tops of their voices. Of course, in England, they would have been swept away ignominiously, and the omnibuses would have departed, but in Paris we do not do this kind of thing. I forget how it ended, but I fancy Madame won—Madame usually does win in Paris.

There is huge interest shown when two *demi-mondaines* quarrel, which is not infrequent. I shall

never forget the sight at one of the very smartest restaurants in the Bois when two exquisitely-dressed "ladies" came to blows. The place was very full, and I am sorry to say that there was no *grande dame* or fashionable man who was haughty enough to show lack of interest! Most people stood up on their chairs to see better. Pandemonium reigned, chiffon and laces were torn, hats were grasped and flung down and trodden on, and, finally, one seized the other's *toupée* of golden curls, wrenched it from the head, sprang on a chair, and waved it triumphantly. That ended the fracas, as the vanquished fair one (alas, considerably less fair now) fled incontinently to hide her denuded head.

I have seen practically the same affair repeated in the *pesage* at Longchamp. It was somewhat comical to see the well-dressed and *distingué* crowd clutch chairs and rush to the scene. I counted over fifty ladies standing on chairs, and one, at least, I recognised as a well-known leader of Society.

But quite the most unusual sight I ever saw was when a well-known Marquis mounted the President's private tribune at Auteuil and struck at him with a stick. Of course the affair was political, nearly everything of the sort is in Paris. Poor Monsieur Loubet was not hurt, but the action was the signal for the most extraordinary scrimmage it is possible to conceive. Imagine the enclosure at Ascot

with its dainty, fashionable crowd, and imagine—if you can—every one suddenly hitting every one else, and you will have some idea of the scene that day at the Grand Steeple at Auteuil. Hats flew about, fists crashed on to faces, women's dresses were torn, men's collars ripped off. It was as if every one had suddenly gone mad. One of my accompanying male friends had his tie wrenched away, his collar and hat crushed, a large tear in his immaculate coat, and a scratch down his face. Having a new dress on I had fled to the shelter of the ladies' room, and when I saw him afterwards I gasped. "What did you do?" I asked. "Hit back for all I was worth!" he answered truculently. "Think I was going to be knocked about by a lot of Frenchmen and not have a look in? Not much!!" The scene of desolation after that battle was astonishing—broken chairs and sticks and umbrellas lying about, mixed up in inextricable confusion with ties, collars, bits of chiffon, crushed flowers from buttonholes, torn pieces of feathers, and every imaginable thing.

So it is not only the "people" who lose their heads!

One of the most exciting riots I ever saw I have described in my chapter on racing, for it belongs more particularly to that subject.

As I have the intention of carefully avoiding politics in this book, I shall not refer here to the

numerous rows and disputes connected with the Dreyfus case, and its many ramifications. Enough has been written of this *affaire*, and these writings can be read by those who wish to study its extraordinary complications.

As for the anti-semitism existing in Paris, no one can understand its strength unless living there. There is no logic in it. It is difficult to realise what would happen in the world of finance and commerce if every Jew suddenly quitted France, taking his capital with him.

Of course, Great Britain and America are the only countries which have not this remarkable prejudice, but in France I think it is stronger than in any other country except, perhaps, Russia.

A short time ago one of the greatest playwrights in Paris, who happens to be of the Hebrew faith, had a play produced at the Comédie Française. Many of his plays had had enormous successes, but not at a State-owned theatre. It is exceedingly difficult for an Anglo-Saxon to grasp the fact that this play had to be withdrawn! The public would not allow it to be acted. The scenes inside and outside the theatre were beyond belief unless seen for oneself. Inside, the actors and actresses were not permitted to speak, there were pitched battles between the various societies—alas! it is difficult to altogether avoid mentioning politics when writing about Paris—and the auditorium was a



A RIOT. CHARGE BY DRAGOONS.

wild pandemonium of howling, excited persons. Outside, the whole great *Place* was a seething mass of people, which was broken now and again by processions of students (the students are always to the fore in every row, as I have said elsewhere) carrying banners with insulting devices. There was a huge force of soldiers and police, which had the greatest difficulty in preventing very serious rioting. As it was, there were many "accidents," and the duels which arose from this *affaire* were numerous. The papers, which always play a large part in matters of this kind, devoted many columns daily to the pros and cons; and an Englishman, who is used to the stringent libel-laws in our country, must have opened his eyes in astonishment at the length the virulent abuse was allowed to go.

Every labour-day—the 1st of May—there are rows and riots of more or less severity, which usually end in a certain number of persons being marched off to prison. The *Place de la Concorde* and the *Place de la République* afford extraordinary sights on this day, the whole of these huge spaces being lined with soldiers, and the well-mounted Municipal Guards galloping here and there wherever they see an extra dense mass of people. As a rule the crowd flies before these soldiers, but occasionally they stand, and then there is a nasty tussle. Last year I saw a *Garde* thrown from his horse,

and it required a somewhat serious effort on the part of his comrades to get him away from his angry aggressors.

Of strikes I have seen many.

Perhaps the most entertaining was the strike of postmen, when soldiers were turned out to deliver the letters. It really was funny to see poor Tommy puzzling over difficult writings, and studying the numbers on the houses! He often forgot a letter, and had to return to a house. Altogether he was much worried!

I have been in Paris during both the times of unrest which are known as the *Congrégationalist* and the *Inventaire* rows. The first was when the famous Bill of Monsieur Waldeck-Rousseau was put into force and all the convents shut up, and the nuns expelled, if necessary, by force. The second was after the Separation of Church and State Bill, when the Government sent authorities into each of the churches to take the inventory of its possessions. A comparatively few years ago both these Bills would have led to very serious bloodshed, but France is becoming more and more atheistic—or rather, I should say Paris, as in the provinces religion still exists to a large extent. But even in Paris the clerical and the anti-clerical factions occasionally made the carrying out of these Bills a very exciting and noisy business.

In the first, whenever it was known what con-

vent was going to be attacked, the nuns sometimes barricaded themselves in, and a large crowd kept watch and ward outside. On these occasions, when the soldiers arrived, it meant many broken heads, alas! However irreligious, many could not help sympathising with these poor nuns fighting for a life-long principle.

The crowds were extraordinary, and I shall never forget how thrilled I was one day when I saw a procession form in the Ternes quarter to march to a convent close by, which was to be attacked that day. At the head of a crowd, armed with sticks and staves and every imaginable weapon, marched a woman—a wild figure shrieking the *Carmagnole*. She wore a short skirt, her hair was down in a disorderly tangle, as if it had been disarrayed by desperate fingers. She had on a red blouse, which was torn open to the waist, displaying her wildly-panting, naked breast. Dancing, shrieking, howling the *Ça ira* and the *Carmagnole*, the crowd rushed on, and I had to look round me at the new houses, trams, omnibuses, and all the other signs of a modern civilisation, to realise that my soul had not taken to itself wings and flown back to the years of the Terror. It “gave one furiously to think” did that maniacal concourse of people. One could not help realising that the Parisians are the same people as they were a hundred and twenty years ago, and that, if anything ever arises

to wake the sleeping lion, we shall see the madness, the lust of cruelty, the horror of hysterical unself-control, as did the victims of those long-ago days.

Has it something to do with the fascinatingly exciting strains of the *Ça ira* and the *Carmagnole*? No one who has not heard a crowd singing these can imagine the astonishing effect it has on one. I consider I am a fairly sane woman, and certainly in England I cannot picture myself marching with a band of students, feeling frantic sympathy with their cause, hating the soldiers and all authorities, feeling the lust of battle—yet this is what, to my own surprise, I found myself doing one summer's night when the whole city was wrapped in excitement over some extra-brutal action of the authorities. The *Marseillaise*, the *Ça ira*, and the *Carmagnole* all fire one's blood, but, whereas the *Marseillaise* makes one feel patriotic and rather nobly self-sacrificing for a great cause, the other two just make one half-crazy with a longing to be "up and doing" something—anything—but to act, not sit still and let others act.

The rows of the *Inventaires* were somewhat of the same character as the *Congrégationalists*, only here it was the churches which had to be guarded. The Government was very clever. Having learnt a lesson by the first riots, it was given out that the inventory was to be taken in a certain church, and, while the excited crowd

waited all day by this church, the authorities would go quietly to one in a different quarter.

For whole days a dense mass of people guarded the Madeleine, the steps and surrounding terraces were packed, and then the gates were closed. The crowd outside in the street numbered many anti-clericals, and these amused themselves by throwing stones at the faithful on the steps. It was safer to wait inside the church !

It was a thrilling moment in the Trinité Church when, after waiting for many hours, a priest came running down the aisle crying, " Shut the doors. They are coming ! " There was a long, low, angry growl from the crowd outside, weapons were grasped, men held themselves upright. The great doors clanged to, and bolts were shot. We waited, waited breathlessly—only the long, long sound of hundreds of angry voices, like the rumble of thunder over the sea.

Nothing happened. In the dusk of evening the crowd dispersed, muttering threats for the morrow. Alas ! When they came to take the inventory no one was there but the priests—the Government was very, very clever.

I saw an ugly riot in the Place de la Concorde during one of these times of stress, when quite innocent people were crushed and wounded. My party had to fly ignominiously before the galloping *Gardes Municipales* ; we managed to reach Maxim's

just in time, and crawled beneath the iron shutters as they were fastening them down. Outside everything was wrecked.

Rows and riots, riots and rows—from the small “argument” in the street, to the serious riots of thousands, I have seen a great, great many. May the time never come, as pessimists are fond of prophesying, when the whole people will go mad once again, and our lovely Paris streets will run blood, when Governments will be overthrown, when the innocent will suffer with the guilty, when the great black-winged form which rules over revolution will spread his pinions and veil the sky to a lurid, battle-darkened canopy.

May the God of justice who watches over nations keep our fair Paris from the sights and sounds which turn young heads grey, and make women wring their hands in futile terror.

For the lion but sleeps, he opens an eye now and then and growls. May he never, never wake.

CHAPTER XX

THE TOURIST

“CHANGE here for everywhere” can be said of Paris, and this partly accounts for the immense swarm of foreigners to be seen in the streets at all times of the year, apart from the regular summer tourist season.

A good many people pass through on their way to or from the South; these usually belong to the upper classes, and Lady Vere de Vere has to stay a few days in the city to “get something fit to wear.”

Then amongst the other passers-through we find those going to or from Switzerland, both for the summer season and the winter sports, though, naturally, many of these do not touch Paris at all, but journey *via* Basle.

But for the tourist proper, August is the month. Then it is impossible to walk in the streets without hearing every moment one's own language (more or less !) spoken.

The French caricature of the English and American tourist is still to be seen. The red-haired,

flat-chested, protruding-teethed, short-skirted female, and the red-faced, sandy-haired, be-capped male with a pipe, abound. While the American be-veiled and be-bagged person is usually sufficient unto herself, and is accompanied by no male protector.

The latter always clutches a Baedeker, in which she searches diligently at every street corner. The former have maps, which they bend over with wrinkled brows.

In restaurants one sees them poring over the menus in agitation. Americans are more enterprising than the English, and one hears: "Say! let us try this." An Englishman says: "'Bifstek,' that must be French for beefsteak! I'll have that, one knows one's safe then!"

One sees the Cockney tourist patently disappointed that he cannot order "a cut from the joint and two veg!" He also usually finds Bass in the wine list, and promptly orders it. He comes abroad, this Cockney, with a firm determination to have everything "as like home" as possible. I heard an Englishman complain to his friend once about a lovely, foamy *omelette* he had ordered. "It was not solid enough"; he turned it over disgustedly and remarked, "Give me our English *omelettes*—this is all *wet inside*!"

The French—picked up from conversation books, and pronounced as spelt—is very funny

sometimes. The famous example of "*Chomps Elizas*" is hardly an exaggeration.

An American once asked me the way to the Bwaer, and I felt horribly embarrassed because I could not understand. I found out, after lengthy questioning, that she meant the Bois !

But one of the funniest efforts I ever heard was in a restaurant, by a man who evidently knew some French. A pear was brought to him, and he felt it, and then said, "Garsong, cette pwaer n'est pas meeyaw." "Comment, Monsieur?" said the puzzled waiter. "Elle n'est pas meeyaw," repeated the man. "Je ne comprends pas," said the waiter, looking more and more worried. "Meeyaw—Mee—yaw—er"—very irritably. The last sounded exactly like an angry cat mewling. A friend with me went to the rescue, for myself I was speechless, and only anxious that the poor man should not see my state.

Another favourite habit of the tourist is to go up to a *vendeur* in a shop, or a passer-by in the street, and speak quietly and calmly in English, and then be very surprised and injured when he is not understood.

I was close to an American one day when he stopped a man in the street and asked some question (it was his third effort), to be received with a shrug and fluent explanation in French that "Alas, I do not speak English." The American

lifted up his eyes to the sky and remarked, "Doesn't *any* one in this adjective country speak a civilised language?"

One hears droll things sometimes when chance ordains that one should visit some show in company with a "personally conducted tour." A few I have treasured up to laugh over to myself, and they may amuse my readers.

Scene I.—Napoleon's tomb at the Invalides. English tourist: "W'y, I thought 'e was buried in England. I know I saw a tomb once at Chiselhurst that they *said* was Napoleon's."

Scene II.—At Versailles. Madame de Pompadour's room. English male: "Who *was* Madame de Pompadore?" Female companion (better read, but shocked): "Hush—I'll tell you after."

Scene III.—Also at Versailles. Tired and fat English housewife. "They couldn't have done with a general servant here!" Remark met with great success.

Scene IV.—Before statue of Voltaire. English female: "Who was Voltaire?" English male, superior: "Oh, an old actor chap."

Scene V. — In street. American female: "What's 'defense d'afficher' mean?" Female companion: "Let's see — 'defense' means defence, 'de' is of, 'afficher' must mean affliction. I expect it's some prevention of cruelty to animals notice, like those on the lamp-posts!" This I

considered distinctly ingenious. For the benefit of those readers whose French is limited, I may say that the notice means "Bill-sticking forbidden."

American tourists are not nearly so ignorant of history as the English. They always seem to know who everybody was, and when they lived. The extraordinary ignorance displayed by the average Cockney makes one blush for the Board schools. One would think every one would know at least vaguely about the Revolution, but in the Carnavalet Museum I have heard questions which show, without any doubt, that some visitors are completely uninitiated.

As a nation the Americans are interested in history; we are not, and it is a thousand pities. How much they miss, these uninformed Britons! They spend their few hard-earned pounds on a trip to Paris, and then lose half the charm of their visit through ignorance of its story. The blood-stained stones say nothing to them. Notre Dame is but a fine cathedral, the Tour St. Jacques but a queerly fretted tower, the Place de la Concorde but a magnificent open space.

Why do they come, these hundreds of English trippers? Is it so that they may be able to impress their neighbours with the fact that they have been "abroad"? I am certain that the vast majority of them would be happier at Black-pool or Southend. They often look uncomfortable as

they wander down the Rue de la Paix, for instance, in their eccentric garments; they feel out of place amongst the daintily-dressed shoppers. It may be because the management of these cheap tours limits the luggage brought to a bag, but, whatever the reason, most of these people appear never to possess anything but the somewhat crumpled clothes they stand up in. Certainly the English tourists seem to me the most aggressive, but that may be because I am English myself, and the Cockney accent necessarily jars more on an English ear than on a foreigner's.

I do not know what the statistics are, but next in numbers to the British come the Americans, and, objectionable as some of them are, with their loud remarks of "Say—isn't it *bully*?" they, to me, seem to realise the spirit of Paris more than their English prototypes.

I find, though, that American residents dislike their own trippers more than they do the English!

South Americans, I fancy, come next numerically. In the tourist season one can see any day olive-skinned families walking in the Rue de la Paix and the Rue de Rivoli, and chattering mongrel Spanish in guttural voices. They take great interest in the jewellers' shops, and they usually wear a good deal of jewellery themselves. They are mostly rich, these Brazilians and Argentines, and they stay at luxurious hotels.

There are tourists of every nation under the sun. Of late years many Germans—though how short a time ago, comparatively speaking, this would have been impossible! There are Turks, Russians, Servians, in fact every European nationality. And here and there one sees stately Arabs, Japanese, Indians, and Easterns of all sorts.

Of course there are many rich Americans too (do not all good Americans go to Paris when they die!), but somehow one does not count them amongst the tourists proper, as they come nearly every year, and they usually have friends in Paris. They spend more than all other visitors put together, live in the great hotels, and dress magnificently—sometimes too magnificently. As an American friend of mine once remarked, “Mrs. A looks always new!” Some of them have “done” Europe at express speed, and settle down, with a sigh of relief, for a few weeks’ rest in Paris before returning home.

They are far and away the greatest travellers in the world. Even the very rich English do not think of journeying thousands of miles each year. As for the American cheap tourist, the same class in England would not think of a voyage of equal length. I was told once by an American that school teachers and female clerks save their money for years for “a trip to Europe.” It is very praiseworthy—that the said teachers and

clerks set one's teeth on edge is hardly their fault.

Tourists and visitors are naturally a great source of wealth to the shopkeeper in Paris, and, I am sorry to say, the "price for the foreigner" still holds good in some of the smaller shops. In the big stores this is not possible, as everything is marked in plain figures. But restaurants, small fancy, and provision shops all think that the foreigner is "fair game," and they fleece him as much as they dare.

An exceedingly irritating habit, which every one objects to, is the way the watching shopkeeper pounces out of some of the small and interesting shops in the Rue de Rivoli the moment any one stops to admire the things in the window. He washes his hands in a would-be ingratiating manner, and implores the fly to walk into the web. If they only knew it, they lose many customers by this objectionable touting; the Anglo-Saxon hates to be bounced, and I have heard many say that they will never buy anything in these particular shops.

It is amusing to see how most shops cater for the English-speaking world. At every step one sees notices in more or less correct English. Some of the efforts are not very successful; witness a restaurant which has a large announcement: "Breakfasts, Lunchs, Dinners, and Suppers!"

A small restaurant I passed lately had the following interesting notice: "White wine since one franc." Poor man! Cannot you see him searching in the dictionary for the English of *depuis*, and finding "since, from, after"—how was he to know which word to choose?

I wish I dared give here one of the most excruciatingly funny mistakes I ever saw, connected with a family hotel—but, alas! in an English book it cannot be done. I must content myself with one other repeatable one. "Blouses made to the hand!" One can easily see how this error arose—"Faites à la main"—à being given in the dictionary as "to."

Cook and various other tourist-agents are exceedingly attentive to the tripper, and really, in these days, it is hardly necessary to speak French. A uniformed interpreter with "Cook" on his cap meets every English train, and what some people would do without him it is difficult to say.

There are also, all the year round, brakes for seeing the sights of Paris, with an English guide. Notwithstanding the other, newer agents, the Parisian still calls the trippers "les Cooks." As a brake-load is getting ready to start (always an amusing spectacle) you will hear from an onlooker: "Regardez-moi ces Cooks, ils sont drôles, n'est-ce pas?"

And amusing they are, very often. But for sheer diversion commend me to a large excursion from Lancashire or Yorkshire. The stolid surprise expressed in uncouth accents, the shining faces and oiled hair of the men, the frizzed hair and "best" dresses of the women—ah me! I wonder whether they really enjoy this trip for which they have saved their sixpences? When St. George's Hall in Liverpool is the greatest piece of architecture they have ever seen, can they appreciate the glories of Versailles or the Arc de l'Étoile?

I was at the station one night when one of these excursions was returning home, and I heard one man remark in heartfelt accents, "Thank Gord, we shall see Oldham again to-morrer!"

To visit other countries may be good for the mind, but the mind ought to be prepared first. I am firmly convinced that a great many of these cheap trippers come to Paris in the sure and certain anticipation of seeing Frenchmen eating frogs as their only form of sustenance.

The prejudice against French customs is extraordinary. I once heard a Cockney saying, in tones of despair, "I've been looking all day for a pub, and there ain't one. None of these beastly public cafays for me!"

An English workman likes to drink in secret. I suppose this accounts for the intemperance in England. A Frenchman is not ashamed to

be seen drinking, because he never drinks too much.

Talking of drink reminds me of one peculiarity that many Englishmen who are not cheap trippers share with their humbler countrymen. They persist in drinking English beer or whisky with their meals. Though France is the land of good wine, though in England they will drink Graves, Sauterne, and Bordeaux, they will not drink the *same* wines in Paris because they are cheap! The average Englishman mistrusts cheap wines. He does not stop to reason that wine in the country in which it is produced is naturally cheaper than the exported article! No, because he "can't get a decent claret in England under so much," he will not drink a perfectly pure wine because it costs but seventy or eighty centimes. It is a queer prejudice, but one that it takes some time to grow out of.

In the Duval restaurants, much frequented by the tourist, one always sees beer ordered by the English—and not the delightful light beer of the land, but Bass, for which a price is charged many times higher than in England.

I cannot dwell too much on this food and drink prejudice. A foreigner persists in buying the products of his own country, and then he grumbles that Paris is expensive—of course it comes expensive to buy whisky, marmalade, British-made biscuits,

and so on : a high duty has to be paid on all imports, and naturally the buyer pays the duty.

Under the circumstances it is ridiculous to grumble.

CHAPTER XXI

NERVES

SOMETIMES statistics appear in English and American medical papers, which show that nerve maladies are on the increase amongst Anglo-Saxons. I sincerely trust that they will never develop to the extent that they have done in Paris.

I remember a time—and it is not so very long ago—when nerves were considered the exclusive possession of women: now it is by no means so. The Parisian is the most “nervey” person in the world, and this (and not want of courage) accounts to my mind for the terrible, uncontrolled panics in times of peril. The audience in a burning theatre is practically incapable of thinking. They are like little children, all these people, and the first idea is to run—run anywhere, anyhow. Logic is forgotten; they *cannot* reason. I once had an exceedingly enlightening conversation with a woman, the wife of a famous nerve specialist in Paris. Apropos of some account in the paper I remarked, “How foolish of people to rush away in a burning theatre. The only thing to

do is to cover one's mouth and nose, and sit still."

She screamed at me with astonishment. "But you would not do that!" she exclaimed. "Indeed, I should." She protested loudly, explaining that the first thing to do was to get as far away as possible from the scene of danger. "Quite so," I answered, "if one *could*. But the point is to reason which one would prefer—to be asphyxiated by smoke, or crushed to death, or horribly mutilated, in a falling crowd of struggling people on the stairs."

"Reason!" she cried. "But one could not reason in a case like that! I know that at the very first moment of alarm I should fly for the doors."

This same woman had an unreasoning fear of being murdered in her bed. She told me (and she was not in the least ashamed of it) that she never went to bed without searching every corner of the room, though her bedroom was situated between those of her husband and her grown-up son. If she was ever in a strange house she assured me she could never sleep a wink for the first few nights. Yet this woman is apparently a normal, healthy, cheerful person, fond of society, amusing, and very talkative.

The *Maison de Santé* flourishes in Paris and the environs, and nearly all are constantly full, the doctors making their fortunes out of neurasthenics.

The terrible extent to which drug-taking has increased is entirely owing to weak nerves and weaker wills. Morphia, ether, cocaine, and several other drugs have their victims by the hundred. Sometimes these enter homes to be "cured," and sometimes with no intention whatever of giving up the habit. I once knew the superintendent of a large *Maison de Santé*, an Englishwoman. I wish I had the power to write the lurid history of that house. The accounts of the horrible lengths to which some of the patients would go to get hold of their drug was enough to turn one's blood cold. Over and over again would needles, syringes, and drugs be taken away from them, and over and over again would the doctors and nurses discover them under that drug's effect. They would bribe the servants, hide the wherewithal behind pictures, sew it in their garments, conceal it in their hair—it was almost impossible to prevent them getting it somehow. Nothing was done by force, as these people had entered the house of their own accord, and no compulsion could be used.

Some of the patients were there for nerves—men and women. I knew the doctor well, and I often used to visit the house, and it was sad to see charming, chic young women and manly, good-looking men absolute wrecks from sheer nerves.

It is a curious thing that a nation that produces some of the bravest and most stubborn fighters

in the world should produce also countless numbers of neurasthenics.

A Parisian is not in the least chary of mentioning his nerves. I said once to a famous *littérateur*, "You're not looking well; what's the matter?" He answered, with a gesture of despair, "Oh, my nerves are all to pieces; it's terrible what I suffer."

Nerves! nerves! nerves! One's servants have nerves, the tradesmen, the clerks, the idle, the busy, the rich, the poor—it does not matter which, they all have their *attaques des nerfs*.

This constantly leads to irritating habits or *tics* as they are called—fidgeting a hand or an arm, nodding or shaking of the head; in fact, a mild form of St. Vitus' dance. In omnibuses and trains it is one's fate very often to sit near a person afflicted thus, and I doubt whether the victim is as conscious of the affliction as the unfortunate looker-on. Hardly a day passes but one meets in the streets people who are talking, laughing, and gesticulating to themselves—they are not in the least mad; it is only nerves!

It is nerves, too, which make the Parisians so hypochondriacal. About three-fifths of them think they have something the matter with their health. Conversation on an afternoon's visit is never complete unless details are given—often nauseating—of one's hostess's and host's health and that of the children and friends, the discussion of the

efficacy of different *régimes*, the ability of various doctors, and so on.

If one invites any Parisians to dinner one must be prepared for *régimes*. This man cannot eat bread, and must drink only white wine ; that woman can eat only “ alimentaires ” ; another must begin with hot water. It is distinctly trying to the hostess. I was at a dinner once where there were sixteen guests, seven of these were on some special diet, and three had little bottles of pills with them !

The conversation consisted of health for the first half-hour, and the *stomach* was mentioned freely. A Frenchman will tell you calmly, “ Oh, I cannot eat so-and-so ; it is so bad for *l'estomac*.”

I wonder whether one can *catch* nerves ! It really appears sometimes to me as if it were epidemic.

I was at the house of a noted writer one afternoon, and his wife took his temperature *five times* in an hour and a half. The last time the thermometer marked 99 degrees. Madame flew to the telephone and implored the doctor to come at once ! I would have liked to suggest that being fussed over so much was enough to make an iceberg's temperature mount.

A cold in Paris is a serious illness, and, if a slight cough is added, it is bronchitis. *Un bronchite* is a frequent malady, and, before I knew the difference, I used to sympathise deeply.

Every Parisian is terrified of a draught ; it is a perfect mania. A visitor once asked me to shut down the blower of the second fireplace in my drawing-room, as the chimney of the lighted fire made a draught crossways with the other. Restaurants, theatres, and concert-halls are hermetically sealed in the winter and spring, and in trains one must go into the corridor for air.

It has always been a puzzle to me why the person who wishes a window shut should have the preference over the person who wishes it open. A Parisian came over to my window in a train once and closed it. It was a warm day in September. I protested. He said sweetly, " But, Madame, I shall catch my death of cold." I answered, " But, Monsieur, I shall die of asphyxiation ! Who is the arbiter that says that that is a more pleasant death than the other ? " He stared, shrugged his shoulders, and his face said plainly, " A mad *Anglaise* ! "

When an Anglo-Saxon is feeling nice and comfortable in an omnibus, for instance, he will see with surprise women fastening their neck-gear higher, and men turning up their coat-collars, while anxious glances are thrown about. Sometimes one of the little top ventilators will be discovered open, and then it is shut with a snap, and strangers will talk to each other about the dangers of a *courant d'air*.

Even in the summer it is rare to find a window open in some Paris houses, and very often have I paid only a short visit because I could not exist in the vitiated atmosphere.

Seldom if ever does a Frenchman sleep with the window open, and I know only *one* (there may be others, of course) who ever has it open in winter, however mild the weather, and one woman—my present maid, to whom I have referred in my chapter on servants. Amongst the lower classes there is a very curious superstition about this: they will tell you quite seriously that if you sleep with the window open (summer or winter) you will become blind! I had a servant once who wept as she implored me not to tempt Providence. I quoted Oscar Wilde at her: “Surely Providence can resist temptation by this time”—but it did not seem to ease her anxiety.

I once persuaded a maid, who thought I could do no wrong, to sleep with her window open one very hot night. The next day she appeared with a tied-up, swollen face—of course it was the result of the “foolishness” of an open window! That she had to visit the dentist to have a tooth drawn, that the dentist said that it ought to have been removed months before, made no difference. I argued that I slept with my window open and suffered no ill results. “Madame is English,”

answered the girl ; “ the English can do droll things. But for the French it is different.”

Yet with all this hatred and mistrust of fresh air the Parisians are the most out-of-door people in the world. The café terraces are packed in spring, summer, and autumn, and even in winter have a few *habitués*. The Bois and all open spaces swarm with men, women, and children all the year round.

The argument is that in the open there are no draughts, and it is the draught which is so dangerous. We have the idea in England that a draught is a *cross* current of air, but in France they leave out the “ cross,” and call it simply a *courant d'air*.

And all this dread is anticipatory terror of resulting illness and its attendant woes and expense. It is astounding what bad sufferers they are, these gay Parisians. A cold in the head, or any small ailment, makes them as gloomy as some huge disaster would. They will stay in bed for the slightest thing, and the whole household must be consulted before they take the simplest dose of medicine. I recommended a friend once to take a small dose of Eno's fruit salt every morning for a week to see if it would cure “ floating spots before her eyes,” as she expressed it. She said she must consult her doctor first. I explained that it was a remedy one could give to children, but she answered, “ It is very dangerous to take things

one has never taken before. It might make me ill. In any case I was going to see my doctor about this, and I will ask him."

If your maid has a cold, or a headache, or a scratch, or a burn, she will appear about the house in the inevitable black knitted *pèlerine*. When I see my maid enter with my morning coffee with shoulders draped in this garment I think, "What is the matter now?" Only last week my maid bit her tongue—for three days the *pèlerine* was *en evidence*, and also a face of gloom. When, after investigation, I said that the mark was very slight, she said, "Ah, but Madame knows that cancer has come from less than that!"

If little Jean or Marthe has a childish ailment the whole household is upset. Papa and mamma give up their engagements, the doctor is in constant attendance, and commotion reigns. I went to call one afternoon at a house where there were two children, and the maid who opened the door told me with a long face that Madame could see no one, the little Jacques was ill. As I was coming away a small English boy of my acquaintance, who was passing a few days in the house while his parents were away, greeted me with a grin. "Hallo, Tommy!" I cried; "I'm sorry to hear Jacques is ill. What's the matter?"

You should have seen Tommy's face of disgust. "Pooh!" he said, with a French gesture.

“Colly-wobbles, that’s all. He ate too many ices yesterday.”

It is usually “colly-wobbles,” as Tommy elegantly expressed it, but that does not prevent hysterical outbursts of despair on the part of all the relations.

It is difficult for an Anglo-Saxon to speak patiently of this idiosyncrasy of the Parisian, and I fear I may be considered somewhat spiteful. But I cannot help resenting the fact that a brilliant, witty, charming people should allow themselves to be governed by a nervous anticipatory terror.

Is it modern, this hypochondria? I fancy it must be. Somehow I cannot imagine the *belles* and *beaux* of the old days worrying themselves over some slight illness or hurt. In all the old letters and diaries I have read there is no suggestion of this overwhelming nervousness. Oh, for another Voltaire to kill the thing with ridicule!

To see a famous Academician have an hysterical *attaque des nerfs*, as I have done, makes one’s heart ache. Is it the fault of the doctors, who make their fortunes by hysteria? Who can say? That the doctors who make nerves their speciality greatly outnumber the others, is very certain.

A young friend of mine who was just setting up a practice was asked by me if he were going in for any speciality. He said, “Oh yes, nerves.” I remarked that surely there were already too many

nerve specialists in Paris. "Too many?" he cried. "There are not *enough*! A nerve-man can always get on."

The French are not great advertisers. For a good many reasons they do not believe in paying for advertisements—yet take up any paper and glance down the pages, and you will see advertisements of various nostrums for the cure of this or that disease. As I write this I pick up a well-known morning paper and find no less than eleven remedies placed before the public by their inventors, and eight of these are for *maladies des nerfs*!

Speaking of remedies, I shall close this chapter by telling an (to me) extremely humorous idea for a cure I have just heard. When I was at Monte Carlo the other day I met a very well-known leader of society in the rooms—she was gambling furiously. She told me she was taking a *rest-cure*, as her nerves were "all to pieces"!

It must have been peculiarly soothing to her nerves to lose money, as the day I met her she had lost three thousand francs, and she told me that she had won only once. The humour of the "rest"-cure at Monte did not strike her, needless to say.

CHAPTER XXII

MONEY

MONEY is a very important topic in Paris.

If you walk along the street for ten minutes you will hear several scraps of conversation connected with this absorbing subject.

It has always seemed to me that a Parisian is more anxious to save money than to make it. The ambition of the average middle-class Frenchman is to save enough to retire on, and to give his daughter a *dot*. His idea of "enough" seems very small to us. One constantly hears, "Oh, So-and-so is retiring, he has luck! He's worth ten thousand a year." This is francs, if you please, and means £400.

He buys a piece of land quite near to Paris, and a horrible stucco villa. A villa is the goal of his desires, and once it is acquired he is happy.

It is a very curious custom in France to keep a large sum of money in the house. Cheques are looked upon with suspicion, and it is quite exceptional to find a Parisian with a banking account.

I know of an English firm who started business

in Paris, and paid a large account, for the first time, with a cheque. The cheque was returned, and cash asked for !

The *garçons de recettes* (bank-messengers) are not allowed to accept cheques in payment of receipted accounts which they present. These gentlemen are very important functionaries indeed, and wear a smart uniform, with a cocked hat—they do not remove these hats when they enter offices. They inspire terror in the breast of the Parisian, and I think he would fall seriously ill if, by any bad luck, he had not enough money in his safe to pay. It would be a scandal for one of these important persons to be sent moneyless away.

A Parisian is the best payer in the world ; he has a horror of debt. Except amongst the *haut monde*, to whom dressmakers and tailors allow some licence, credit is unknown. In business circles the *fin courant* is a most important day. It is the last day in the month, and on that day the *garçons de recettes* are very busy running about the streets.

Bad debts are rare, and English people who start business in Paris are astonished at the punctuality with which all sums owing are paid. A relation of my own told me once that the only debts owing on his French books were those of foreign firms.

A Parisian looks upon debt as a disgrace, and it would be admirable if we had the same scruples in England.

There are not even the weekly housekeeping books. As I have said in my chapter on servants, all food is paid for daily, milk and bread are the only weekly bills.

This reason, and the absence of cheque-books, account for the sum of ready money kept by Monsieur on the premises. Burglars have good hauls on the rare occasions when they manage to break into a Paris flat.

After the collection of the *fin courant*, the business man keeps in cash what he considers sufficient for his monthly expenses; the rest he invests at once, buying French *rentes*, municipal bonds, and so on. The script he keeps either in his own safe or in one hired at a bank for from £2 a year upwards.

Cheques do exist in France, of course, but any one who has tried to cash one at a bank will realise that they are not common.

I will give, without an atom of exaggeration, a transaction of mine at the Crédit Lyonnais. And let me say here that it is the ordinary experience of any one who wishes to cash a cheque.

The bank is a huge building, and, after inquiry, I found myself in the immense centre hall, lined with counters behind gratings. After trying several wrong *guichets* I arrived at last at one which appeared

to be the right one. I handed in my cheque (drawn on their own bank, *bien entendu*), which was examined back and front by two men for a few minutes. Then they filled in a form, and handed it and the cheque to a man, who disappeared. To myself they gave a metal disc with a number on it, and with this I marched to the chairs in the centre of the room, where I sat and read a paper. From time to time a number was called in stentorian accents, and various patient people rose and went to the cashier's desk. After twenty-five minutes my turn came. I was lucky—it can be anything from fifteen to fifty minutes. I made my way to the paying desk (not the same as the one I had visited before), gave up my number, stated the amount of the cheque and my name, and was reluctantly paid by a person in resplendent uniform, with a large metal plaque on his breast.

It is a tiring process, and one is glad that cheques are not a more usual method of payment.

On the back of the cheque one has to write, "*Pour acquit*" and one's name and address and the date.

I was in an English bank in Paris one day when a *garçon de recettes* came in and presented a cheque. The clerk looked at it, and I saw the messenger glancing round hopelessly for a chair.

"Shall I come back in an hour?" he asked patiently.

"Oh no," said the clerk, and opening a drawer, took out notes for eight thousand francs, and proceeded to count them across the counter.

All the English onlookers thought that the messenger was going to faint! His astonishment was one of the funniest things I have ever seen. He exclaimed, "*Comment! déjà?*" in stupefied accents, and seemed to gather up the notes and stow them away in a dream.

An amusing, if fatiguing, experience was when I went at my own request with a friend to collect the large sum of twenty francs from a Government office. He had to go himself, as the Government will not pay a clerk.

We arrived at two o'clock at the great building. There, after many inquiries, and waiting for a considerable time, we mounted in a lift to the top floor. The receipt was examined, and we were told that we must go to the annexe (ten minutes' walk away) to have the amount verified. Off we went, and were received very politely by an important gentleman in a frock coat. Some large ledgers were brought in by a clerk, and a quarter of an hour was occupied in examining several pages. At last *Monsieur le fonctionnaire* concluded that all was correct, and he gave us a printed order for the sum.

With this we wended our way back to the first place, and presented the order to pay through

a little window. It was examined by *four clerks* separately, and then another slip of paper was given to my friend, and he was told to go through a door marked "private." By this time I was so helpless with laughter that I could not follow him, but sat on a velvet seat mopping my eyes, and being stared at by the four clerks in amazement—they could not see anything amusing in the affair at all. In ten minutes my friend joined me, and held up a louis in triumph.

We left that office at ten minutes past three !

I have said elsewhere that a Frenchman's idea of business is to docket everything in countless paper-covers, and every item of expenditure has to be entered and re-entered elaborately. The consequence is that the simplest piece of business takes untold time to regulate.

It is the same thing in the post-offices. Changing a postal order or registering a letter is a lengthy process. It often is enraging when one happens to be pressed for time. A *lettre recommandée* has to be entered up in I do not know how many books, and very often the man at the *guichet* will wrangle in the middle of it with his neighbour about a lost sou.

Oh, those lost sous ! How many times have I seen the passengers in trams and trains agitated with the general search amongst their feet. It is no use trying to sit still and be indifferent, you *must*

get up and shake your dress and seem as interested as every one else, otherwise you are looked on with suspicion !

I saw a pathetic little paragraph in the paper the other day. The following is a translation : “ Monsieur X, living at —, died yesterday in one of the — trams. He was stooping, looking for a lost piece of money, when he suddenly collapsed. When carried to the nearest chemist’s he was found to be dead.”

I feared the same thing would happen once in an omnibus, where a very stout man was getting redder and redder as he grovelled on the floor for a two-sou piece he had dropped.

An Englishman once dropped a fifty-centime piece in a tram. He looked about casually for it, but it had evidently slipped down between the slats of the flooring. He said it did not matter, and went on reading his paper. I am certain the other passengers looked upon him as a lunatic. They poked about with sticks and umbrellas, they shook out their skirts, and were generally much excited. After about ten minutes one man touched the Englishman’s arm and pointed to a distant corner. “ I think that’s it, Monsieur ! ” he cried. “ *What ?* ” said the Englishman, looking puzzled ! Oh dear, oh dear, it was very, very funny. Of course he had forgotten all about it, but the Frenchman thought that he was quite mad.

Another habit of the Anglo-Saxon meets with great disapproval—his loose money. No Frenchman would think of doing anything so crazy. It is interesting to see the male passengers when the bus-conductor comes round for the fares. Out comes Monsieur's purse, and the two or three sous are produced, the purse carefully closed again, and put away.

Provincials, who have not been used to the "Mad Anglais," stare with gaping astonishment when they see an Anglo-Saxon dive into his trouser pocket and produce coppers and silver in one confused handful. They watch anxiously lest any should drop, and sigh with relief when the residue is restored in safety. Apropos of the subject—I have never seen a French person pay for a friend in a tram or omnibus; however large the party, each pays for himself.

A Parisian carries far more money about with him than we do. A man in London may have a pound or two on him, and a cheque in case of emergencies. In Paris his prototype will have several hundred francs, at least, in his wallet, and sometimes thousands. He seems to walk about with all his wealth in his pocket. It is surprising to me that a Parisian, who is usually nervous about everything, should do this. Custom, presumably, has blunted his fears.

A ten-centime stamp has to be affixed to all

receipts over ten francs, and this the customer generally has to pay. Consequently, Parisians rarely pay on delivery for goods from the big shops. It is strange for foreigners to see ten centimes extra on every bill they pay at the door.

One exceedingly useful system in France is the possibility of collecting accounts through the post, and it is difficult to conceive how any business country can get on without it.

The process is very simple. A business man makes out a certain number of receipts, which are entered on forms given by the postal authorities, and placed in envelopes addressed to the postmasters at the various towns. These are then posted as registered letters. In four or five days the postman calls with the letters containing the returned forms and the money orders. If any one has not paid, the receipt is returned, together with the reason for non-payment—"Absent from home," etc. The post takes a certain small fee for the collection, which comes to about the same thing as if letters and invoices were sent.

For small sums this is a great convenience. How many business firms in England care to write a cheque for a few shillings? or take the trouble of buying a postal order? This custom doubtless contributes to the easy collection of debts, the debtor has no trouble; a postman calls and he

pays the amount owing, that is all. It saves an enormous amount of correspondence, writing paper, and worry. Dear, conservative England is one of the only countries which has not adopted this system, and when she does it will be found a boon and a blessing to all business men.

When on the subject of money it is impossible to ignore what, till quite lately, was the one French rashness—lottery tickets. Up to a year ago tickets could be bought nearly every week. There was always some lottery on hand. They were authorised by the State for various charities, and, as far as the drawings were concerned, I believe were quite fair. If one is to credit the statements of the average Parisian, the charities did not receive much in the end !

Then the Government stepped in and said there were to be no more lotteries. They amalgamated all the outstanding lotteries into one big concern with five drawings, and the tickets cost twenty francs. This is to be the last—so they say, but, personally, I shall never be surprised to see another announced. It is difficult to imagine a Parisian existing without his lottery and the subsequent excitement of the drawing.

I own to the fascination myself, and I once won sixty francs. What the feelings must be of that lucky individual who wins the million, I cannot divine—one man died from the shock.

CHAPTER XXIII

LAISSER-FAIRE

“A man he seems of cheerful yesterdays
And confident to-morrows.”)

No one who has lived in Spain can have failed to be impressed with the constant use of the word *Mañana* (to-morrow) ; it may almost be considered as the national motto.

Although the word *demain* is not so much in evidence in Paris, there is a spirit of procrastination running through all grades of Society, and it is worthy of a few observations in this book.

No one but a resident can realise the length to which this is carried ; from the Government down to the tradesmen nothing can be depended on.

Unpunctuality is the curse of Paris.

My readers will have noticed casual references to this in other chapters. Business appointments are kept any time within a few hours of the moment arranged. Theatres begin half an hour or so after the time advertised. The races start usually within half an hour of the card time. I went once to a very important concert which had not begun

fifty minutes after the announced hour, and even the French audience became impatient and clapped and shouted—then *one* item was given to keep us quiet, after that another long wait.

No tradesman keeps his promise by any chance. If you are foolish enough to move into a house before all is finished, depending on the declaration that the workmen will leave the next day, you may reckon on, at least, a week of discomfort with the whole place topsy-turvy.

Nobody can rely on being up to time anywhere. The theatres' *quart d'heure de grâce* is obliged to be extended to half an hour, and even then people dribble in after the curtain is up, and disturb their neighbours.

A well-known French woman-writer made an amusing remark to me the other day. She was telling me the history of a business appointment a man had made with her, only to keep her waiting for two hours, and then not see her. She added, "This unpunctuality is abominable, I lose hours a day by it. I myself am very punctual—for a *Frenchwoman*." Then she laughed at my mischievous twinkle, and went on to speak strongly of the national failing.

It was she who said to me once, "I would write and ask Monsieur X, but I know he would not answer the letter!"

"Never do to-day what you can put off till

to-morrow," the Frenchman says to himself, and, until this is applied to business, it is not so trying to the temper. One gets used to functions and amusements beginning late, and, after all, it does not much matter, but in business affairs it is certainly most irritating.

You need never hurry in Paris. Perhaps this is why there is such a large American colony ; they may find it a species of rest-cure after the "hustle" of their own country.

In England we are exceedingly punctilious about dinners. It is rare for the cooking to be spoilt by waiting. In Paris, guests invited for eight o'clock arrive any time up to nine. I sent invitations once for a quarter to eight, hoping to sit down to table at eight-fifteen — we sat down at ten minutes past nine ! I went once to a house for a seven-forty-five dinner, and arrived punctually ; my hostess was not ready, and we began dinner at nine-fifteen.

However, the most extraordinary point about the whole thing is that this *laissez-faire* is not only the failing of the individual, but of the State.

Article after article appears in the papers calling attention to absolutely astounding lapses on the part of the authorities. A short time ago *Le Matin* had three large headings on the first page— "*Scandale ! Scandale ! Scandale !*" each over an account of some *lacune* of the Government.

A few days ago, in the same paper, Clément Vautel had an amusing article on the subject of shutting the stable door after the horse is stolen. Amongst other things he instanced the new system of guarding the treasures in the museums. It was known for years that the old method was inadequate, but until the tragedy of the Mona Lisa loss, nothing was done. To-morrow, to-morrow, to-morrow ! It is quite time enough.

But there are other, far more extraordinary, cases, which are ventilated from time to time.

It is difficult of belief, but an indisputable fact, that a large Government building, erected ten or twelve years ago (I think the latter), at the cost of several millions of francs, has *not yet been occupied*. The only person in it is the doorkeeper. This magnificent place stands there in one of the busiest thoroughfares with its uncurtained windows, like eyes of reproach, staring down at the passers-by. Its great empty central *cour*, untrodden by the foot of the busy Government clerk, and its pristine whiteness gradually becoming blackened by the hands of time. The papers devoted columns to this "*Scandale*," but nothing has happened.¹

An amusing instance of procrastination is the case of the hand-bill distribution. For years Paris

¹ Since this book went to press a notice has appeared in the papers to the effect that the President has promised to open this building on the 16th of October. A grand reception is to be held after the ceremony.

streets were a disgrace to civilisation owing to the enormous numbers of advertisements given away and then thrown down. It may not be known to all my readers that bills stuck on hoardings or walls are obliged, by law, to have a stamp affixed to each—it is a Government tax. Well, the trader who found this form of advertisement expensive, sent bill distributors out into the streets with huge bundles of papers and cards, one of which was thrust into the hand of each passer-by.

After talking about it, literally for years, a by-law was passed by the Municipal Council forbidding distribution in the streets free of tax. That is to say, all bills given away were to be stamped. The law was known to every one, yet—nothing happened for months. What was the reason? The machinery for stamping was not yet bought, so the law could not be put into active operation!!

To show that my strictures are not the mere prejudiced cavillings of a foreigner, I will translate here part of a sarcastic article which appeared in a Paris paper on the 14th May this year. I must explain that a portion of the wonderful bas-relief of the Porte St. Martin fell one night (the 12th May, I think), mutilating the figure of Louis XIV.

The article heading is :—

“ *Louis XIV. will be repaired in 1917.* ”

After a whimsical paragraph on the subject, the paper goes on to say :—

“Here are the various phases and procedures which the work will follow, with the approximate dates :—

15th May 1912.—The *Officier de Paix* of the tenth *arrondissement* transmits his report to the *Préfet de Police* on the fallen body and arm.

1st June.—The *Préfet de Police* transmits the report to M. Joltrain, the head of the Circulation Office.

25th June.—M. Joltrain returns the papers to the *Préfet*.

7th July.—The *Préfet* calls into requisition the *Beaux Arts*.

13th July.—The Under-Secretary of State of the *Beaux Arts* sends the documents to the proper office.

4th August.—The ‘proper office’ puts the question before the Architect of State Monuments.

1st September.—The Architect of State Monuments asks for a committee to be convoked.

18th September.—The Committee of the Society of Historical Monuments meets, and names a reporter.

18th March 1913.—The Committee discusses the report. It decides to make an inquiry.

27th April.—The Committee transmits its report to the Under-Secretary of State of the *Beaux Arts*.

4th June.—The “proper office” decides to ask for power.

13th August.—The Under-Secretary of State of the *Beaux Arts* asks the Minister of Public Instruction to enter officially on the budget a credit for the reparation of Louis XIV.’s body and arm.

5th September.—The Minister of Finance consents to enter the amount in the Budget of 1915. He thus advises the Budget committee, and the *Beaux Arts* committee.

31st March 1915.—The Budget of 1915 is adopted, with the credit for repairing the body and arm of Louis XIV.

1st September 1915.—The architect, furnished with all the regulation documents, begins to erect the scaffolding.

1st March 1917.—The work is finished. The scaffolding is removed. Louis XIV. has a new body and a new arm.

Be it well understood that the above time is only the minimum !”

Hardly a week passes but one sees some article of the kind in the papers. The journalistic finger of

fun is pointed at the Government—but authorities in Paris are impervious to ridicule.

Red tape has a lot to do with this droll state of affairs. A certain other country is supposed to possess more red tape than other nations, but methinks that for every foot used in this other country there must be an ell used in France.

One day a taxi-motor skidded on a bridge in Paris, crashed through the parapet, and fell into the river. The driver was saved with difficulty. The papers, a few days afterwards, with no hint of sarcasm, declared that the poor man was fined for bathing at an illegal time and place!! I can quite believe it. Red tape says that bathing may be indulged in at certain times, and in certain authorised places; the chauffeur *did* enter the river, of that there can be no doubt. Logical conclusion—it was illegal.

Possibly it is the criminal law which shows up most noticeably the spirit of procrastination. The Parisians are absolutely astonished at the speed with which things are done in England. They took a deep interest in the Crippen case, and several people remarked to me with surprise on the extraordinary (to them) celerity with which the various processes of police-court hearing, trial, and appeal took place.

In France the *procès verbal* begins immediately the criminal is caught. After that nothing more

is heard of him for many months—that is, until the trial takes place. Sometimes a year passes between the capture and the sentence. It will easily be seen that this is a terrible injustice to the innocent, and there is no compensation.

There is no excuse for these delays, and, to Anglo-Saxon ideas of justice, it is unpardonable.

I feel sure that it can partly be accounted for by the *dossier*; the Parisian business or professional man has a perfect passion for *dossiers*. Every document is placed neatly in its paper or leather covers—and there forgotten. Each paper is *classé* with an enormous amount of ceremony, the neatness is astonishing. It seems to me that a Frenchman simply hates to disturb the exquisite order of his *dossiers* by removing a paper!

You go to an *homme d'affaires* with some little job, he says it shall be seen to at once. Nothing happens. In time you may very likely forget the matter entirely. An English friend told me the other day that, going over some old books, he found the entry of three accepted bills which had not been paid. Well, my friend asked his head clerk about these bills, which were dated in 1909, when he (my friend) had been abroad. He found that the matter had been put in the hands of an *homme d'affaires* in April 1909. Nothing further had been heard from him since, and the affair had been forgotten. On visiting the lawyer the documents

were found neatly docketed, with a note that the money had been applied for *once*—after that, nothing !

A maid of mine has had a lawsuit dragging on for a year. It is a very simple matter of a depository, the proprietor of which would not give up some goods of hers. But, simple or not, the whole process is an endless worry owing to the lethargy of her *homme d'affaires*.

The average Parisian will never go to law unless he can't help it. You may say to a man who has been cheated or injured in some way, "Why don't you bring an action?" He will give the inimitable French shrug of despair, and answer, "What's the use? It would take months. I haven't the time."

The Napoleonic code is the very best in the world—on paper ; it is the *modus operandi* that is all wrong.

Speaking of the law, it may not be amiss to mention here a very interesting process in divorce cases—a custom which, I fancy, other nations might do well to emulate. Before the case goes to the courts Monsieur and Madame appear before the judge in his private room, and he talks to them like a father. He takes each ground of complaint separately, and argues about it and tries to show that this and that are not so very terrible after all. "Why not give him another chance?" he coaxes.

Or " Well, Madame may have been extravagant, but, doubtless, she will improve. She is very young and very pretty, you must love her. Why not make it up ? "

It is no uncommon thing for the contending parties to be melted to tears, fall into each other's arms, and receive the blessing of *le bon juge* !

In these cases the law's delays have done good ; Monsieur and Madame have had time to think about it.

To get the authorities to move in France it requires some catastrophe.

As Clément Vautel said in the article I have already referred to—

" In France, when anything goes wrong ' M. Quidedroit ' says : ' Bah ! it goes all right till the catastrophe ! ' "

" ' Quite so, but avoid it—it's quite possible with a little forethought. ' "

" ' Never ! Don't complicate our existence. Change nothing. . . ' "

" But when the harm is done an extraordinary zeal seizes the people on whom depend our security, our welfare, our honour, and the rest. . . Quickly they go into committee, they deliberate, they decide, they reform, with great speed. What activity, what love of progress ! "

No one could say that the French as a nation are lethargic, yet in this one way the lethargy is remarkable. It is a constitutional objection to doing any thing *now*. It runs through every class, and the people know it themselves.

Note a man giving instructions for something to be done immediately—he is not content to say it once, he will repeat it many times, quit the

person perhaps, and return to emphasise the fact that it is not to-morrow he wants the work done, but *tout de suite*.

Then, after all that, ten to one it will have had no effect whatever !

To a business-like person this trait is an exceedingly irritating one, but the French appear to have become resigned. They grumble, but it is a more or less good-natured growl. They know that it is no use getting angry and upsetting themselves, it will not alter anything one iota.

When all authorities show the way with a complacent procrastination, can it possibly be expected that the man in the street shall keep his appointments ? He finds that punctuality benefits him not at all—he loses nothing by his *laissez-faire* policy, therefore why should he put himself out by an absurd slavishness to the fetich of “ the hour and the minute ” ?

A friend of mine once made rather a delightful paradox—

“ The Parisian has learnt the enormous force of inertia ! ”

Was it not Napoleon who was supposed to have said that, if you did not answer letters for six months after their receipt, it was astonishing to find how many of them had answered themselves ?



THE PROCESSION TO THE STRASBOURG MONUMENT.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE NEW PATRIOTISM

PARIS has always been patriotic. Even in the most terrible moments of her history, even when the gutters ran blood, and the very stones seemed to groan in tribulation—when thousands took up their positions every day in the Place de la Révolution to watch Samson at work, when Fouquier-Tinville's mistaken enthusiasm rose to a pitch of horror—it was all *pour la patrie* for the great mass of the people.

In '70 patriotism shook the very walls as the crowds followed the marching regiments, all shrieking “À Berlin !” It was patriotism sorely wounded, with a wound that stung to madness, that made the Commune with its attendant miseries.

Alsace-Lorraine lies buried in the heart of every Frenchman, with tears as a pall.

The grandchildren of those who fought are now growing up, and these may forget, but men over sixty and their children remember with a bitter

memory, and, if giving their life's blood would alter things, they would give it joyfully.

Anti-militarism certainly has its few followers, but this is the spirit of revolt against authority which is becoming so prevalent nowadays. The chiefs of the anti-militarists profess to be as truly patriotic as any one!

I think France is more enthusiastically patriotic than any nation. Is the reason that in the battle-cry there is nothing to divide the allegiance? "*Pour la France!*" Not "*Pour la France et le Roi.*"

One cannot imagine any wild patriotic chant coupled with the eminently uninteresting and respectable President of the modern Republic!

The present Minister of War may have thought that enthusiasm was sleeping when he hit on the brilliant notion of weekly tattoos. He must have been surprised when he saw how easily the people responded. Every Saturday night throughout the winter a regiment with band playing has made the rounds of some quarter of Paris. The district chosen was not announced beforehand, no one knew where to wait.

Suddenly, in some quiet spot, the soldiers appeared.

"*Vive l'Armée!*" Rrrr—oll go the drums. Left right, left right, go the marching feet, with that curious scrunchy, scrunchy sound that exhilarates

the hearer. Windows are flung open, the balconies are crowded in an instant with families and their servants, all cheering lustily. Cafés and restaurants empty as by magic, drinks and food are left undrunk and uneaten, while the customers and waiters stand on the pavement and cheer. Every hat flies off as the flag passes, and the tune of the march is sung and hummed by a thousand lips.

In front, behind, at the sides of the regiment, marches the army of the people. Left right, left right, in step with the soldiers—singing, cheering. In every street the crowd grows greater till the tail of the procession stretches far out behind.

There are all sorts in this crowd. The veteran who perhaps marched forty-two years ago with that tragic army, and who now holds up his head proudly with a light of battle in his eyes. Young men who have done their service and who have the quick military step of the soldier. Boys and youths who have not yet served. *Midinettes* and their sweethearts marching arm-in-arm. Clerks, tradesmen, workmen in blouses, children—they all march, singing and beating time with sticks and umbrellas. And, as they pass along the roads, off goes every hat of the men lining the route to the flag they have served or are going to serve.

Where is anti-militarism now? I would like

to see what would happen if one of these ranters started preaching in the route of this triumphant procession !

Some people have shaken their heads over these tattoos, and said " Is it wise ? " Knowing how quickly patriotism is turned to Chauvinism in Paris they fear the result. One man said to me, " Given any excuse now, the people would shriek for war. The match is ready to drop into the powder."

It may be so. But take the other outlook—suppose war were forced on France, is it not better to have the spirit ready and willing ? The French are amongst the best fighters in the world, if not the best, but they can do nothing without enthusiasm. The man doing his military service passes through the dullest routine. He hates it. It is of no use talking to the uneducated of the necessity of preparation, he has not been taught to think. If he thinks at all it is to say to himself that war is impossible, and all this service is mere vexation of spirit. It is as well to let the budding youth see a little of the show and glory. I cannot help thinking that this year the military authorities will find less shirking, there will be fewer youths let off for " illness," malingering will, to a great extent, disappear, anyway amongst the Parisian soldiers ; all will want a share of the glory to come.

Patriotism has taken a new lease of life. Every newspaper has been full of some project or another "pour la France et la gloire."

A short time ago a public subscription was started for presenting aeroplanes to the army. This met with instant success and wild enthusiasm. Over three million of francs have been collected already, and in every quarter of France there have been entertainments got up for the cause.

One of the greatest newspapers devoted columns every day to the list of subscribers, and some of the items were very touching. Beneath the subscription of a thousand francs from some rich financier one would see, "Two workmen patriots, 50^c "; or "A seamstress, 20^c "; "A group of midinettes, 1 franc "; and so on. A very large sum was sent in pence by the very poorest.

Women especially have contributed to make the success of this monster subscription.

In one or two big places of business the employés have collected amongst themselves enough for an aeroplane which they have presented to the "fifth arm" of the army.

School-girls have inaugurated entertainments, theatres have given plays, great actresses have come down in costume between the acts and personally collected from the audience. France

will soon have a most magnificent fleet of air-craft, and the people will have given it.

I give below a translation of a letter sent to the editor of *Le Matin* by a singer :—

“As an artiste, one of my greatest and most ardent delights was to sing for the French military aviation before the patriots who, on the 11th February, mustered, at the Sorbonne, for the General Aeronautic Association.

“I also would like to contribute to this great enterprise.

“The Minister of War has decided on a ‘fifth arm.’ It must have a flag.

“I enclose two hundred francs towards its purchase, and I ask other Frenchwomen to join me in giving it—beautiful as sacrifice, beautiful as glory, beautiful as hope, beautiful as the France which it will represent.”

I can hear the cold Anglo-Saxon murmuring “high-falutin nonsense !” Yet is it ? Remember that if a Frenchman can talk of his innermost feelings, they are none the less sincere for expression.

To “maffick” is not the only way to show patriotism. For myself I find it finer to show a heart which thinks sacrifice, glory, hope, and France beautiful, than to grumble at war taxes, and get drunk over victory.

England’s wars have, for centuries, been carried on beyond the seas ; if she had, within our fathers’ times, seen a victorious enemy marching through the streets of London, perhaps even the phlegmatic Londoner would cry without shame, “For England and the King !”

Young women and young men in France can remember sitting at their fathers’ knees and

tenderly stroking the scars of battle. Their mothers have told them how they waited, shivering, in the cold and snow, for their pittance of black bread and soup, or their piece of horse-flesh to be given out to them, when Paris was shuddering in the throes of the terrible siege. How they waited anxiously after each *sortie* to know what had happened. How they wandered pathetically from hospital to hospital when some loved one had not returned. How their hearts ached in their poor starving bodies as the days dragged on. How, as each reverse became known, the people wept and groaned.

It is easy to keep patriotism milk-and-watery when war is in a distant land, but when you have seen the enemy marching through the streets, and have draped your balcony with black as a welcome, patriotism is in the blood.

It is not mere words. I defy any one who has not a heart of iron to see unmoved the annual pilgrimage of the *League des Patriotes* to the Strasbourg statue in the Place de la Concorde. On this day the old wreaths are removed, and new ones placed round the knees of this mourning monument—wreaths tied with the tricolour, and with touching inscriptions. There the patriots make speeches, and a silent crowd of students and others stands uncovered, as at a funeral oration.

Many Anglo-Saxons, who do not know what

Alsace means to the Frenchman, ask why the statue is always covered with wreaths. Some have thought it "ridiculous." Is it so ridiculous as to annually decorate the statue of a statesman with a certain flower which was *not* his favourite, but the favourite of his queen's dead husband?

The inscription on the flag-filled plaque of the *League des Patriotes* on the Strasbourg memorial is—

"QUI VIVE ? FRANCE, QUAND MEME !"

Can anything be more simply pathetic?

Whether patriotism would slowly die in France if some shuffling of Europe brought her back her lost provinces, I cannot say. But till that takes place it will certainly never die. She has suffered, and her wound still bleeds, and while a wound is bleeding the patient does not forget the sword which caused it.

An Englishman is patriotic in war time, a Frenchman is patriotic always.

It must not be forgotten that every man in France is a soldier. When he is twenty-one he serves his two years, and, though he may hate his training, he knows that he may be called at any time to fight for his country, therefore he takes a personal interest in "wars and rumours of wars."

Every mother, every daughter, and every sister also watches anxiously when nations snarl



THE ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE TO THE STRASBOURG MONUMENT. PLACING THE WREATHS.

at each other. Yet, for all their anxiety, I feel sure that no women or girls amongst them would try to keep their men at home if the worst came to the worst. They might weep, but they would still cry—

“ Pour la France et la gloire ! ”

